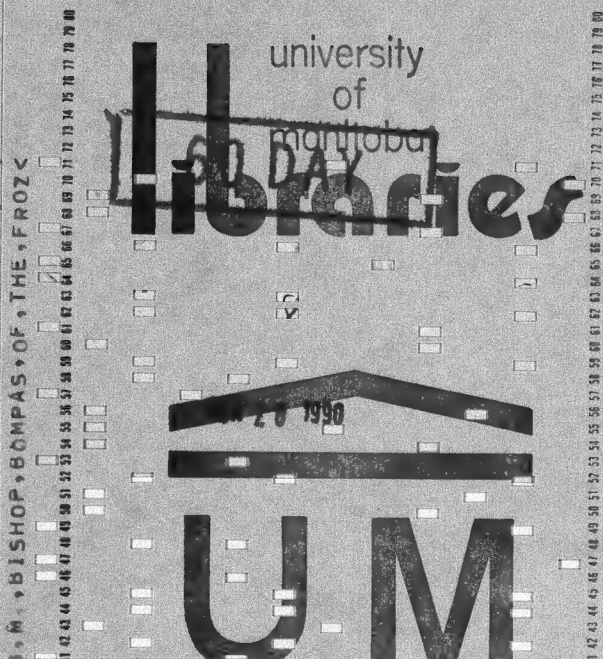


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BISHOP BOMPEAS OF THE FROZEN NORTH



By
NIGEL.B.M.
GRAHAME



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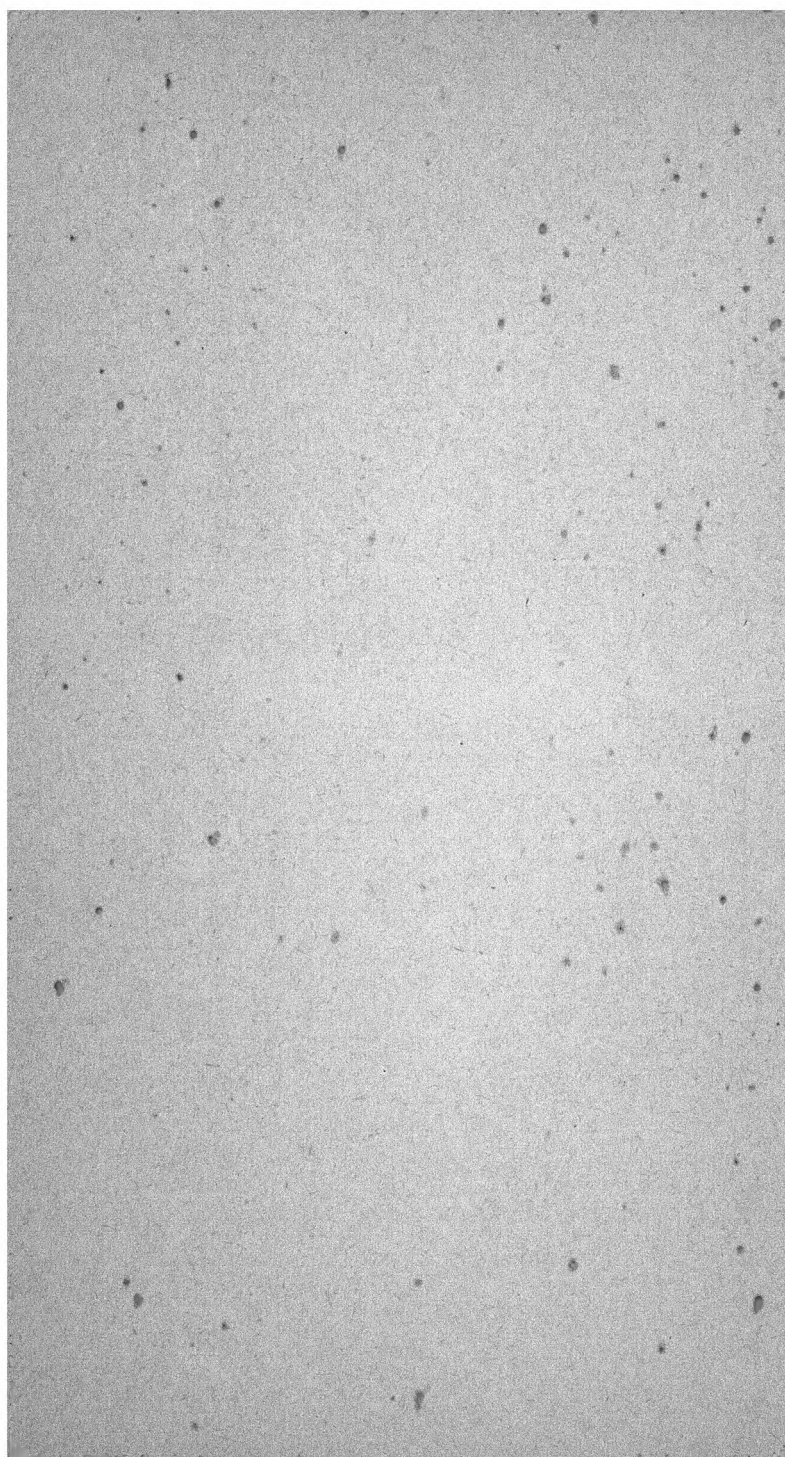
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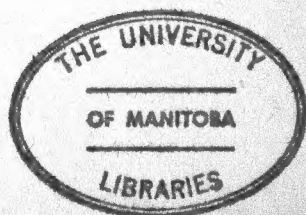
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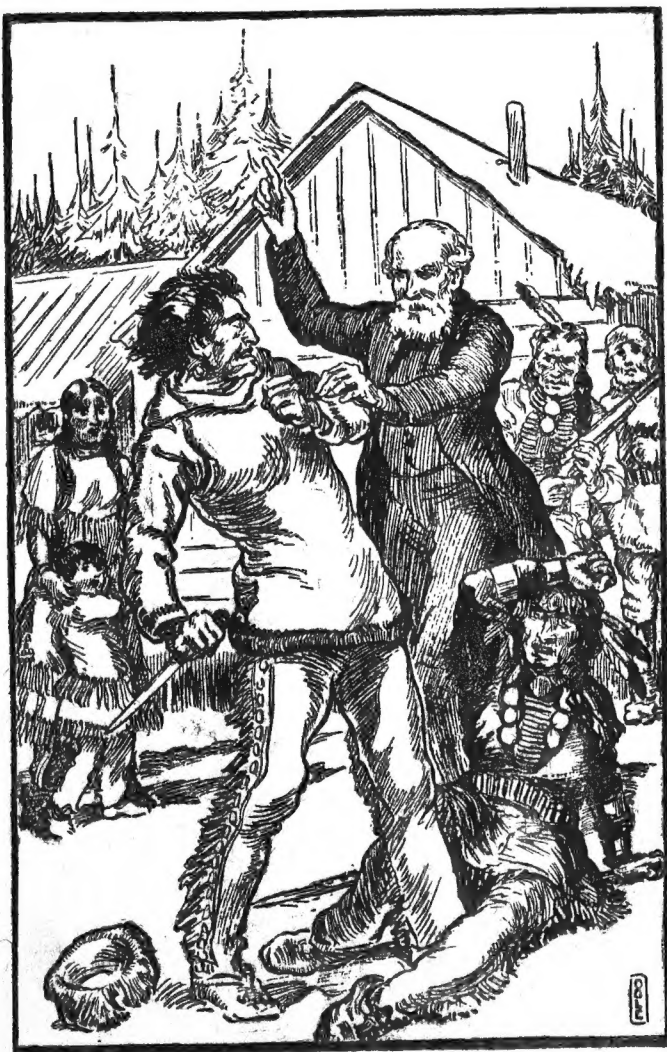
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PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

THE matter contained in this book has been derived from a larger volume "On Trail and Rapid by Dogsled and Canoe. Bishop Bompas's Life," by the Rev. H. A. Gody, M.A.

Bishop Bompas of the Frozen North

THERE was very little in Bompas's early life to show that he contained the stuff of which heroes are made. He was a shy boy, fond of retirement and study. But there was good blood in his veins, and blood will tell. The family, on his mother's side, was partly Royalist and partly Puritan. One member is known to have been private secretary to Henrietta Maria, and was hung by the Parliamentarians for aiding Charles I, while another at one time was secretary to Hampden. The characteristics of these two great parties were in later years remarkably united in William Carpenter Bompas.

The Bompas family is of French extraction, and there is an interesting tradition which tells how the name was first given. It was on the field of Crecy that an ancestor performed a deed of valour in the fight, for which he was knighted by Edward the Black Prince. A bystander remarked "C'est un bon pas," and the Knight replied that he would take that for his motto.

His father, Charles Carpenter Bompas, was a Serjeant-at-law, and a very eminent advocate. He is said to have been the prototype of Dickens' immortal character, Serjeant Buzfuz. The father died very suddenly when William was ten years of age, leaving a widow and eight children, five sons and three daughters.

Those characteristics which marked Bompas's later life in so pronounced a manner showed themselves in his early youth. He was of a retiring nature, and the usual games of boyhood, cricket, football, and the like, did not appeal to him, his chief recreation being walking, and sketching such objects of interest as he encountered in his rambles. Gardening, too, was a hobby of his, and the experience and knowledge thus gained stood him in good stead in later years when planning for the mission farms in his northern diocese.

The home influence was of a deeply religious character but

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without austerity, for Serjeant Bompas was liberal-minded and placed no undue restrictions on those amusements of his children which were of an innocent nature. William's parents belonged to the Baptist denomination, and in due course he was baptized and admitted as a member. He attended a small day-school, and his intellectual qualities were of such a high order as gave promise of a brilliant University career had such a course been practicable.

This, however, was not to be, and he was therefore articulated to the same firm of solicitors with whom his brother George was working. At the expiration of his five years he transferred himself to another City firm, with whom he remained about two years. During this time his health broke down and he was forced to give up work altogether. But his never was a life of inaction, and his time was filled with the study of the Greek Testament.

As his strength returned his mind turned more and more to his early desire of entering the ministry. Leaving the communion of his early associations he decided to seek ordination in the Church of England, and in 1858 was confirmed by the Bishop of London at St. Mary's, Bryanston Square. His remarkable linguistic ability enabled him soon to add by private study a good knowledge of Hebrew to that of Latin and Greek, which he already possessed.

In 1859 he was accepted by Dr. Jackson, the Bishop of Lincoln, as a literate candidate for Holy Orders, and was ordained deacon by him at the Advent ordination the same year, and appointed curate to the Rev. H. Owen, Rector of Trusthorpe and Sutton-in-the-Marsh.

The first charge was a trying experience. The parish of Sutton was a wild district, with a rough and primitive population, and most of the men had been smugglers in former times. No school was established, and there had been no resident clergyman since the time of the Reformation. Mr. Bompas at once began a great work among the children, gathering them into his own house, and teaching them, at first by himself, and later with the help of his sister and a girl from a neighbouring village. By his care for the children, and by the unfailing sympathy shown in his visits to his parishioners, he succeeded in winning their gratitude and confidence. His plan for the erection of a school was at first strongly opposed by some of the

Bishop Bompas of the Frozen North 11

farmers, who were unwilling to give land for the purpose. But Mr. Bompas, with that tact and gentleness which marked all his dealings, at length overcame opposition, and when he left at the end of two years the building was completed and opened.

While at Sutton, in the second year of his clerical life, a great sorrow came to Mr. Bompas in the death of his mother, to whose bedside he was summoned in January, 1861. He was devotedly attached to her, and was able to take part, with the rest of his family, in ministering comfort to her during her last days.

In 1862 he accepted the curacy of New Radford, Nottingham, a poor and crowded parish, populated largely by lace-workers. The number of souls, about 10,000, within the small triangle of New Radford was about the same as the population of the vast diocese of 900,000 square miles of which he was later to have episcopal supervision. To this circumstance he referred when preaching in the parish on his return to England for consecration in 1874.

From Nottingham, Mr. Bompas went for a short time as curate to Holy Trinity, Louth, Lincolnshire, returning in 1864 to his former neighbourhood as curate to the Rev. H. Oldrid at Alford, Lincolnshire. As the earnest curate passed from house to house in his daily work, his parishioners little thought what a bright fire of enthusiasm was burning in his heart. He had been much stirred by the stories told by missionaries of heathen dying without the knowledge of Christ in far-away lands, and he longed to go abroad and bear the message of salvation. His mind turned to China and India, with their seething millions; but as he was a little over thirty years of age at that time, the Church Missionary Society thought him rather old to grapple with the difficulties of the Eastern languages. But when one door closes, another opens, and at the right moment Bishop Anderson arrived from Rupert's Land, and made his great appeal for a volunteer to relieve the Rev. Robert McDonald at Fort Yukon.

It was on May 1, 1865, that this missionary Bishop was touching the hearts of a large crowd at St. Bride's, London. He had travelled a long way to attend the anniversary of the Church Missionary Society, and was preaching the sermon which was destined to bear so much fruit. Bishop Anderson

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was the bearer of a great message to the Church in England. He had much to tell of the vastness of Canada, and the great regions where the children of the wild lived and died without the knowledge of Christ. He told of a lonely mission-station on the mighty Yukon River, where a soldier of the cross the Rev. Robert McDonald, with health fast failing was standing bravely at his post of duty till someone should relieve him. What thoughts must have surged through his mind as he looked on the many upturned faces before him! Who was there among those listeners willing to consecrate his life to the Master's work? Lifting up his voice, the Bishop uttered these words, which have become so memorable:

"Shall no one come forward to take up the standard of the Lord as it falls from his hands, and to occupy the ground?"

The service ended, the clergy retired, and the congregation began to disperse. But there was one whose heart had been deeply touched by the speaker's words, and, walking at once into the vestry, William Bompas, the Lincolnshire curate, offered to go to Canada to relieve the missionary at Fort Yukon.

He was at once accepted by the Church Missionary Society, and ordained to the priesthood by Bishop, afterwards Archbishop, Machray, who had just been consecrated as successor to Bishop Anderson.

Only three weeks did Mr. Bompas have in which to prepare for his long journey; but they were sufficient, as he was anxious to be on his way. So complete was his consecration to the work before him that "he decided," so his brother tells us, "to take nothing with him that might lead back his thoughts to home, and he gave away all his books and other tokens of remembrance, even the paragraph Bible which he had always used."

Shortly after Mr. Bompas was accepted by the Church Missionary Society, he went to Salisbury Square and inquired how far it was to his mission-field, and the length of time required for the journey. When told it was about 8000 miles, and that he was hardly likely to reach it that year, a smile passed over his face as he replied, "I see, I must start with a small bag."

After he learned more about the country, a longing entered

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into his heart to start as soon as possible and reach Fort Simpson, on the Mackenzie River, by Christmas Day. Was such a thing possible? No one before had ever done it in winter, and was it likely that the young, ardent missionary would be the first to accomplish the task? With this determination, Mr. Bompas was not long in making preparations for his journey, and on June 30, 1865, he left London for Liverpool, where he boarded the steamer *Persia*, bound for New York.

Reaching New York on July 12, two days were spent at the Astor House Hotel, where they had the exciting experience of viewing a disastrous fire right across the street, when a large block of buildings, including Barnum's Museum, was destroyed. From New York they proceeded to Niagara by the Hudson River and New York Central Railway.

Leaving Niagara, they reached Chicago by way of Detroit. Here were seen "many soldiers returning from the war, some of them wounded, and most looking pale and sickly, reminding one too plainly of the many who never returned." From Chicago they went by rail to La Crosse, and thence by steamer to St. Paul. Here Dr. Schultz, a Red River merchant and afterwards Sir John Schultz, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, was met, who conveyed their heavy luggage across the plains in his ox-train, and proved in many ways of great assistance.

At St. Cloud the first difficulty presented itself. Since the fearful Sioux massacre of 1862, people were in great dread all over the country, and they found it impossible to get anyone to convey them on towards Red River. After much trouble and delay, they were forced to procure a conveyance for themselves. Before leaving St. Cloud, they were told time and time again to beware of the Indians, who were always prowling around. "But," said one informant, "they will respect the English flag, and I advise you to take one along." Such a thing the party did not possess. But Mr. Bompas was equal to the occasion; so, procuring some red and white cotton, he soon formed quite a respectable banner, which was fastened to a small flagstaff erected on the cart.

Dr. Schultz had been overtaken some distance out on the prairie, and when they had gone some way farther mounted Indians appeared in sight, and, like the wind, one warrior

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swept down to view the small cavalcade. Beholding the flag of the clustered crosses, he gazed for a time upon the little band, and, moving away, he left them unmolested.

Reaching the Red River in safety, Mr. Bompas was much pleased with the whole general appearance of the place.

Here he had not long to wait, for the boats of the great Hudson Bay Company were ready to start on their long northern journey, and he was to go with them. There were four boats, called a "brigade," each rowed by seven or eight men, "mostly Salteaux Indians, heathen, and unable to speak English—a tribe much averse to Christianity."

Then northward fled that fleet of boats, across great inland lakes, over hard portages where the freight had to be carried, past the Company's posts, mission stations, and Indian encampments, where services were held when possible.

But winter was rapidly closing in upon them and threatening the daring voyagers. Sixty-three days had they been out from the Red River Settlement when Portage la Roche was reached on October 12, and there they found they were too late to meet any boat going farther north. Here was a difficult situation, but Mr. Bompas was not to be defeated. Engaging a canoe and two French half-breeds, he pushed bravely forward. The journey was a hard one. In some places they had to battle with drifting ice, and the water froze to their canoe and paddles. Still they pressed on, all day long contending with running ice, and the bleak, cold wind whistling around them and freezing the water upon their clothes. At night there was the lonely shore, the camp-fire, the scanty meal, and the cold ground covered with brush for a bed. The next day up and on again—the same weary work, the same hard fight. Such was the struggle for eight long days, till Fort Chipewyan, on Lake Athabasca, was reached.

Here Mr. Christie, the officer in charge of the post, gave him a hearty welcome; here the warm stove sent out its cheerful glow, and here, too, were to be found many comforts for the winter months, if he would only stay and rest. But no; it was ever up and on. Never before had such a man stood within the fort. Who could conquer that northern stream at such a season? But the missionary only smiled, and asked for canoe and men. He was given a large craft and three Indian lads.



A RECONNAISSANCE

Beholding the flag of the clustered crosses he gazed for a time upon the little band, and, moving away, left them unmolested.

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And once more that dauntless herald of the Cross sped northward. For several days the trim canoe cut the water, driven by determined arms. Then winter swept down in all its fury; the river became full of floating ice, jamming, tearing, and impeding their canoe. Axes were brought to bear; they would cleave a passage. The missionary must not be stopped. How they did work! The ice-chips flew; the spray dashed and drenched them, and then encased their bodies with an icy armour. Colder and colder it grew, and the river became a solid mass from bank to bank. The canoe was dragged ashore, and placed *en cache* on the bank with their baggage. All around was the pitiless wild. It was a dreary sight to this intrepid traveller, with winter upon him, the bleak wilderness surrounding him, and with very little food. The enthusiasm of a less ardent spirit would have been completely damped; but Mr. Bompas was made of sterner stuff, and without delay he and his companions pushed forward through the forest. On and on they travelled by a circuitous route, through brushwood and thickets, with clothes torn, hands and faces scratched and bleeding, and uncertain where they were. Night shut down and wrapped them in its gloomy mantle. All the next day they struggled forward, without food, and again night overtook them. Still they staggered on, and just when they were wearied to the point of exhaustion the lights of Fort Resolution, on Great Slave Lake, gleamed their welcome through the darkness.

It was necessary for the traveller to remain here until the ice in the lake became firm enough to cross with dogs and snow-shoes. Mr. Lockhart, the Company's officer, offered his hospitality, and during the delay Mr. Bompas continued busy "in the preparation," as he tells us, "of letters for the winter express, which is despatched hence to the South in December, and also in practising walking with snow-shoes, in preparation for my journey forward."

After he had remained at Fort Resolution about a month, "Mr. Lockhart kindly despatched him across the lake on snow-shoes, with two men and a sledge of dogs." Ice was found drifting in the open lake, and they were obliged to lengthen their course by following the shore very closely. "However, by God's help," wrote Mr. Bompas, "we arrived safely at the next post (Big Island) in five days, when I

Bishop Bompas of the Frozen North 17

was again hospitably entertained by the officer in charge, Mr. Bird."

Here again he waited anxiously for the men from Fort Simpson with the winter packet of mail. They arrived on December 13, and four days later they started for Fort Simpson, and the missionary with them. Could they make the fort by Christmas Day? that was the question. Only a short time remained in which to do it. Day after day they sped forward. Saturday came, and still they were on the trail, and the next would be Christmas Day. One hundred and seventy-seven days had passed since leaving London, and was he to lose after all, and so very near his destination? But still the dogs raced forward, nearer and nearer, till, oh joy! on Christmas morning the fort hove into sight. There was the flag floating from its tall staff; there were the men crowding around to give their welcome, and among them stood that dauntless pioneer, the Rev. W. W. Kirkby, with great surprise on his face as Mr. Bompas rushed forward and seized him by the hand.

People get very much excited over the North Pole explorations. They praise, too, the few men of the Royal North-West Mounted Police, who in these days patrol the Arctic coast at the mouth of the Mackenzie River. But how few know about the missionary heroes who have advanced into those desolate regions, facing hardships and even death to bear the Gospel message to the Eskimo living in those places. It was Mr. Bompas who first went as a missionary to the Arctic coast at the mouth of the Mackenzie River, and the story of his experiences and narrow escape from death is one of the most thrilling in missionary annals.

On a journey to Fort Yukon he had met a number of Eskimo at Fort McPherson, who requested him to go with them down to the coast. He could not get these poor creatures out of his mind, so in the spring he went back over the mountains for the purpose of visiting them. These natives, with their strange, uncouth manners, strongly appealed to his noble nature.

Leaving Fort McPherson on April 18, 1870, Mr. Bompas started down the river in company with two Eskimo, hauling a small sled with blankets and provisions. On the way he

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received a message from the Chief of the Eskimos telling him to go back, as the natives "were starving and quarrelling, and one had just been stabbed and killed in a dispute about some tobacco." But this message had no effect upon the missionary; he was busy in his Master's service, and he knew that same Master would take care of His servant, and undaunted, he pressed bravely forward.

For three days they continued to travel without any difficulty, camping at night on the river-bank, and making a small fire of broken boughs. But the glare of the spring sun was very severe, and Mr. Bompas was stricken with snow-blindness. This affliction is one common in the North, and only those who have themselves suffered on the trail can fully realize what it means.

"As the sun rises higher," wrote Mr. Bompas, "and has more power in the months of March and April, to walk long over the snow in the sunlight becomes distressing to the eyes from the dazzling brightness. This is especially the case in traversing a wide lake or in descending a broad river, where there are no near forests of bark pines to relieve the gaze, nothing but an unbroken expanse of snow.

"The effect of this is to produce, after a time, acute inflammation of the eyes. These, in the end, may be so entirely closed as to involve a temporary blindness, accompanied by much smarting pain. . . . The voyager feels very helpless during the acute stage of snow-blindness, and, like Elymas the sorcerer, or St. Paul himself, he 'seeks some one to lead him by the hand.'"

For three days in awful darkness he was led by the hand of the native boy, making about twenty-five miles a day, till the first Eskimo camp was reached. It was only a snow-house, and to enter it with closed eyes, stumbling at every step, was a most disagreeable introduction.

After one day of rest in the snow-house, he recovered his sight, and then, moving forward, reached another camp. His appearance at each place, so he tells us, "excited a great deal of observation and curiosity, as they had never had a European among them in the same way before."

In this camp he was disturbed "by yelling and dancing" on the very spot where he was lying. This was caused by an old woman "making medicine—that is, conjuring in order to

Bishop Bompas of the Frozen North 19

cure a man who was, or was thought to be, sick." Mr. Bompas, unable to stand the terrible confusion, tried to stop them by saying that medicine-making was all a wicked lie, whereupon the old woman threw herself upon the missionary, and in no gentle manner vented upon him her wrath. After this he left the place and betook himself to another camp, where he lay down and "enjoyed a good night's rest." Next morning, seeing the man who was the cause of all the trouble, Mr. Bompas found he was suffering from a sore head, for which he gave him a "small piece of soap and a few grains of alum to rub it with." When he saw the man some time later, he was told that his conjuring was very strong.

He noticed how ingenious the Eskimo was in the formation of implements "out of any old iron which he is able to obtain, such as files, saws, etc., from which he will forge variously shaped knives, gimlets, and other tools, with which he constructs his boats and canoes, as well as arrows, bows, spears, fishing-hooks, nets and tackle, sledges, and all other implements for the chase, as well as furniture for his tent."

Then he watched his skill in building the snow-house, which he could "compare to nothing but the skill of the bee in making its honeycomb. . . . The snowy material is so beautiful that the work proceeds as if by magic. The blocks of frozen snow are cut out of the mass with large knives, and built into solid masonry, which freezes together as the work proceeds, without the aid of mortar. Being arched over, a dome-shaped house is formed, with a piece of clear ice for a window, and a hole, through which you creep on all-fours, for a door or entrance. One-half of the interior is raised about two feet, and strewn with deer-skins as beds and sofas, and on them the long nights are passed in sleep, for which an Eskimo seems to have insatiable capability and relish." People who were so clever and artistic, he well knew, must have a love for the beautiful, and were capable of higher things.

He studied their religious instincts, and found they were very low. They were addicted to lying, stealing, and even stabbing. "They practised heathen dances, songs, and conjuring, and placed much dependence upon spells and charms."

Though he found them at times very treacherous, yet there was a spirit of true hospitality still existing, which he felt could be fanned into a flame, and which would work a great

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change. His own difficulty was the language, and he maintained that the best hope would be to bring a Christian Eskimo from Labrador, as the Moravian missionaries there and in Greenland had mastered the language in the course of many years' labour.

Though the language was a great obstacle, still Mr. Bompas determined to do the best he could. He collected many Eskimo words, and, with his remarkable linguistic ability, made fair progress in a short time. He found they expressed great willingness to be taught.

He accompanied them on their various hunting and fishing journeys, and lost no opportunity of studying them and winning their affection. He stood by their side as they fished for hours through holes in the ice, observing their great patience. During the cold weather Mr. Bompas slept with the Eskimos in their small, crowded houses, and the inconvenience he suffered must have been great, as the following words will show : " The Eskimos sleep in their tents between their deer-skins, all together in a row extending the whole breadth of the tent ; and if there are more than enough for one row, they commence a second at the foot of the bed, with the head turned the other way. For myself, I always took care to commence the second row, keeping to the extremity of the tent, and thus generally rested without inconvenience, except, perhaps, a foot thrust occasionally into my side. At the same time, it must be confessed that the Eskimos are rather noisy, often talking and singing a great part of the night, especially the boys ; and if any extra visitors arrive, so that the tent is overfull, it is not exactly agreeable."

For a time things went very well with Mr. Bompas, and he was allowed to move from place to place and teach the simple truths of the Gospel as far as he was able. But the cruel conjurers, or medicine-men, were watching him with suspicious eyes. They did not like the man to be in their midst with the new teaching, and they therefore determined to get rid of him. Now the Eskimos have a great dread of evil spirits. So one day the conjurers made the startling announcement that evil spirits were in the camp, and that the white man was the cause of them. They determined, therefore, to drive them out, and also to drive out the missionary from their midst. Mr. Bompas was trying to

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sleep in one of the houses when the medicine-men began to dance and conjure about him. Finding it impossible to get any rest, Mr. Bompas went outside, and there rolled himself up in his blanket. The conjurers followed him, and continued their diabolical noise. "Only those," says Bishop Stringer, "who have seen the Eskimo conjuring dance can realize how wild and savage it is, and how desolate a feeling it brings to one not accustomed to it."

For a while they continued the noise, and several times they jumped upon the missionary in order to enforce their meaning, but the Heavenly Father was watching, and delivered His faithful servant. After a while the medicine-men said they had accomplished their purpose, and would let the white man live.

But Mr. Bompas did not put much dependence on these words, and knew that at any time they might turn upon him and tear him to pieces. This they attempted to do not long after. It happened, when the ice had gone out of the Mackenzie River, the Eskimos began to move up-stream to trade with the Hudson Bay Company at Fort McPherson, taking the missionary with them. It was a voyage of 250 miles, and much ice was encountered. For days they made slow progress, and laboured hard. Then they became angry with one another, and, stirred by the jealous medicine-men, also cast threatening glances upon the white man in their midst. They imagined that in some way he was the cause of all their trouble, and angry glances were followed by threatening gestures, and Mr. Bompas realized the situation was most critical. One night, after a day of unusually hard work—when little progress had been made—the natives became so hostile that Mr. Bompas feared they would take his life ere morning. But, notwithstanding the impending danger, the faithful servant committed himself to the Father's keeping, and, wearied out, soon fell asleep.

His great friend among the Eskimo was the old chief, Shipataitook by name, who had at the first invited him to visit them, offered the missionary the use of his camp, and entertained and fed him with the greatest kindness and cordiality. He had taken such a fancy to the brave young white man that he could not see him murdered without making an effort to save him. He had heard the threatening words,

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and when the plotters were about to fall upon their victim, he told them to wait, as he had something to tell them before they proceeded farther. Then he began a strange story which, falling upon the ears of the naturally superstitious natives, had a great effect. He told them he had a remarkable dream the night before. They had moved up the river, and were almost at Fort McPherson; and as they approached they saw the banks lined with the Hudson Bay Company's men and Indians, all armed ready to shoot them down in the boats if they did not have the white man with them. When this story was told, all plotting ceased; and in the morning, when Mr. Bompas awoke, he found no longer angry glances cast upon him, but the natives were attentive in their care.

On June 14 the ice left them and the river became clear, and without more detention they continued on their way, "and arrived safely, by God's help," says Mr. Bompas, "at Peel's River Fort on June 18, about midnight."

Never again was Mr. Bompas able to visit that band of Eskimo along the Mackenzie River, but he ever held them in mind, and often his heart went out to them, and he declared that "there was nothing warmer than the grasp of a Husky's hand."

One day when Mr. Bompas was walking along the Yukon River, he returned to Fort Yukon, and found there a letter awaiting him. It was from England from the Church Missionary Society, asking him to go all the way to London to be made Bishop of the vast northern Diocese of Athabasca, which was to be formed. Mr. Bompas did not want to be a Bishop. He preferred to live the life of a humble missionary among the Indians whom he so dearly loved.

In July, 1873, he set his face homewards with the express purpose of turning the Church Missionary Society from the idea. It was a long journey that lay ahead of him, fraught with many dangers and difficulties. The clerk at Fort Yukon in charge of the American Fur Company's post, kindly supplied him with provisions and with two Indian lads, who had volunteered for the trip. Soon all was ready, and then the start was made up the Porcupine River; and after two weeks of hard and persevering labour, he reached the Rocky Mountains. Here the Indians left him to return to Fort Yukon, and alone and on foot the missionary began his journey

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across the mountains. Three days was he in accomplishing the task, and in a furious snowstorm, "which rendered the mountains almost as white as in winter," reached Fort McPherson, Peel River, on August 6.

Starting again by canoe, Mr. Bompas, with two other Indian lads, reached Fort Simpson, a distance of 800 miles, on September 2, "after three weeks of fatiguing towing." Pushing on his way, after a difficult journey, contending with the cold and swift stream, he reached Portage la Roche on October 8th, having travelled 2600 miles since July, "and all, except about 300 to 400 miles, against a strong current."

Owing to the cold weather he was forced to remain at the Portage for ten days, and when the swamps were sufficiently frozen he "started on foot through the woods to Buffalo Lake in company with two servants of the Hudson Bay Company." Reaching the lake, he travelled with some difficulty on the fresh ice around the margin, and at the farther end found a camp of Indians, who guided him to Isle à la Crosse. Here a detention of ten days was made, and then he left with dogs and sledge for Green Lake, with three employés of the Hudson Bay Company. The weather becoming milder, they were forced "to cross one of the intervening rivers on a raft."

From Green Lake they entered "on the plain country of Saskatchewan," and after a walk of five days reached Fort Carlton. While here Mr. Bompas visited the Prince Albert Settlement on the banks of the North Saskatchewan, and says: "This settlement is the first that has been formed by the immigrants in that neighbourhood, and it bears every sign of increasing prosperity and success."

From Carlton House, Touchwood Hills was reached with a horse and sledge. Here, through the kindness of the postmaster, he was furnished with a carriage and dogs, and, after a journey of 400 or 500 miles, reached the Red River Settlement.

It is said that when Mr. Bompas reached the episcopal residence and inquired for Bishop Machray, the servant mistook him for a tramp (in his rough travelling clothes), and told him his master was very busy, and could not be disturbed. So insistent was the stranger that the servant went to the Bishop's study and told him a tramp was at the door determined to see him.

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"He is hungry, no doubt," replied the Bishop; "take him into the kitchen and give him something to eat."

Accordingly Mr. Bompas was ushered in, and was soon calmly enjoying a plateful of soup, at the same time urging that he might see the master of the house. Hearing the talking, and wondering who the insistent stranger could be, the Bishop appeared in the doorway, and great was his astonishment to see before him the veteran missionary.

"Bompas!" he cried, as he rushed forward, "is it you?"

We can well realize how Mr. Bompas must have enjoyed this little scene, and the surprise of the good and noble Bishop of Rupert's Land.

We will let Mr. Bompas describe the rest of the journey:

"From Manitoba the dog-train was exchanged for the stage-coach for Moorhead, the terminus of the American railway towards the north-west. In this the cold was piercing and freezing, even though the travellers were wrapped in buffalo skins. The poor horses were utterly exhausted in drawing the vehicle about fifteen miles through the snow, and though they were changed thus often, yet at last the journey had to be suspended during a storm, and in the end the horses, though changed every stage, occupied a week in performing the same distance as that travelled by the dogs in four days, more easily and pleasantly—that is, 160 miles.

"The journey was next continued by railway, but from the fires not being lighted in the cars the cold was intense, and the train was shortly brought to a standstill in a snow-drift. Though two locomotives were tugging at it, no progress could be made till the guards with shovels disengaged the carriage-wheels from the snow which entangled them.

"In Canada the journey by stage-coach was resumed. This was shortly after overturned into a ditch by the wayside while sealing a snow-drift. The outside passengers were deposited in an adjoining field, where, to be sure, the snow provided them with a sufficiently soft bed to fall on. The inside passengers had a more uncomfortable shaking.

"The journey was next proceeded with by train to Montreal, before approaching which the cars left the rails, causing some apprehension and delay, which might have been increased had not the guard been provided with a powerful winch for the purpose of replacing the carriages on the track.

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“From Montreal, following the Grand Trunk Railway to Portland, I embarked in the steamship *Scandinavian*, of the Allan line. At starting, the masts, yards, and decks of the steamer presented a woeful appearance, from being thickly coated and hung with ice, yet 200 miles were made the first day. By the constantly increasing head-wind, however, the daily speed was decreased down to 100 miles per day, at which rate the captain thought it prudent to shut off half the steam, and diminish the speed to a minimum, for fear that something should give way in the plunging vessel. After thirteen days, under the careful seamanship of Captain Smith, Liverpool was reached on February 13, in the safe-keeping of a protecting Providence.”

Mr. Bompas was unsuccessful in dissuading the Church Missionary Society from carrying out their plan, and on May 3 he and John McLean were elevated to the Episcopate. Bishop Bompas was not to return alone to his great work, for a few days after his consecration, May 7, he was united in marriage to Miss Charlotte Selina Cox by Bishop Anderson, assisted by the Rev. John Robins, Vicar of St. Peter's, Notting Hill, and the Rev. Henry Gordon, Rector of Harting. Mrs. Bompas was a woman of much refinement and devotion to the mission cause.

The Bishop and Mrs. Bompas, on May 12, 1874, set their faces towards their great field of labour. Friends and loved ones came to bid them farewell, among whom was Bishop Anderson, late of Rupert's Land, who presented the Bishop with a beautiful paten for his cathedral in the new Diocese of Athabasca. The steamship *China*, of the Cunard Line, received them, and soon she was cutting her way through the water bound for New York. Consecrated, married, and sailed all in one week ! Such was the record of the Bishop, who declared it was the hardest week he ever experienced. Never again was he to look upon the shores of his native land, or visit the scenes of childhood ; the northern wilds of Canada needed him, and there he remained till the last.

Ahead of them lay the long journey of two months by open boat to Fort Simpson. At Winnipeg they missed the boats of the Hudson Bay Company, and after some difficulty another was obtained, in the hope of overtaking the former. It was a “brilliant, cloudless” June morning when they crossed

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the prairie towards St. John's Cathedral, and sighted the "river, looking still and silvery in the morning light," and found the boat, their home for weeks to come, "moored just below St. John's College." Farewells were said, the boat pushed off, and they moved on their way.

The many long, hard portages formed a great impediment to their progress, and through the scorching heat, fighting myriads of mosquitoes, the provisions had to be carried overland and the boat dragged up the rapids. The Bishop willingly took his share of the labour, and though of great strength, overtaxed himself in lifting a heavy box, and sprained his back, or, rather, re-sprained it, as he had been injured some weeks before in hauling at the boat. He suffered much agony from the sprain, which troubled him somewhat during the rest of his life.

An incident happened on this trip which serves to show the Bishop's forgetfulness of self when others were to be considered. A young Indian lost his hat overboard, and, being unable to obtain it, suffered much from the heat as he toiled at the oar. The Bishop, seeing his discomfort, at once placed his own hat upon the Indian's head, and insisted that he should wear it. The sight of the native with the flat, broad-rimmed episcopal headgear caused great amusement to the entire company.

Fort Simpson was reached on September 24, and much excitement took place. The red flag of welcome was soon hoisted, and Mr. Hardisty, the chief officer, and the whole settlement came to the shore to meet them. So hearty was the reception that they did not perceive the shadow—the grim shadow of starvation—that was hanging over the fort and land. There was only one week's provisions in the Company's store, and game was very scarce. At this point the new party arrived, bringing six extra mouths to be fed, besides the boat's crew, and yet the Company's officers received them with the utmost courtesy and good temper, and did their best to look and speak cheerfully. Most of the men around the fort had to be sent away, and there was difficulty in collecting dried scraps of meat for the wives and children. At length there came a tide, when there was not another meal left. The poor dogs hung around the houses, "day by day growing thinner and thinner, their poor bones almost through their skins; their sad, wistful

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look when anyone appeared. Even a dry biscuit could not be thrown to them." But just when matters reached the worst, two Indians arrived, bringing fresh meat, and the great tension slackened.

The Bishop had to be ever on the move to cover even a small portion of his huge diocese. He had no comfortable railway cars in which to travel, and no horses to draw him speedily along: only dogs, faithful little animals, to carry his food and camping outfit, while he and his companions walked.

Fort Simpson was chosen by the Bishop as his abode at first. It is situated at the confluence of the Mackenzie and Liard Rivers, and formed the most central and convenient point for managing the vast diocese. This position had been occupied years before by the Hudson Bay Company, and here, in 1859, Mr. Kirkby built the church and mission-house.

"If all the population between London and Constantinople were to disappear, except a few bands of Indians or gipsies, and all the cities and towns were obliterated, except a few log-huts on the sites of the capital cities—such is the solitary desolation of this land. Again, if all the diversity of landscape and variety of harvest-field and meadow were exchanged for an unbroken line of willow and pine trees—such is this country."

Three hundred miles from Fort Simpson was another post of the Hudson Bay Company, Fort Rae. Here was a band of Indians who needed the message of the Gospel, and the Bishop decided to go to them. Together with several men from Fort Rae he set out, having with his sled Allen Hardisty, an Indian who was being trained as a catechist.

"It was a clear, beautiful morning," says Mrs. Bompas, "November 27, 1874. The great frozen river glittered in the sunshine. Not a smooth, glassy surface, but all covered with huge boulders of ice, and these again all thickly strewn with snow. . . . Here are our 'trippers,' as they are called, and all ready to start, and my Bishop in his fur cap and warm wraps which I have made for him. His large mittens, formed of deer-skin and fur, are suspended from the neck, as is the custom here. Allen, the catechist, packed the sledges last evening with their bags of clothing and provisions for the way—blankets, cooking implements, etc. There are three sledges, and the dogs ready harnessed. I am rather proud of my 'tapis,' which, amid sundry difficulties, I contrived to get finished, with some

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help, in time. Now comes the word, 'Off! all ready!' Our farewells are said, the drivers smack their whips, the dogs cry out and start in full scamper, the trippers running by the side of their sledges at such a pace that they are soon out of sight."

It is certainly an interesting thing to watch a dog-team start on a long journey. The harness is decorated in gay trappings with ribbons, beads, coloured cloth, and many jingling bells. The dogs enter into the spirit of the undertaking, and lift up their voices in wild yelps and barks.

A good dog-team in the North costs from \$100 to \$200, averaging about \$25 a dog. Some of the best in the country are bred by the natives, nearly every grown-up Indian having his own dog-team and sledge or toboggan. The Indians make their own sledges and harness, the former being made of birch-wood, and the latter of moose-skin.

Though the Bishop and his companions started off bravely and in high spirits, they little realized what difficulties were ahead. The snow was deep and the cold intense. The dogs suffered much. The sharp crust and ice cut their feet and blood-marked every foot of the trail. This is by no means uncommon in Northern travel. The snow gathers in lumps between the dogs' toes, and often the poor brutes will stop and tear savagely at the pieces with their teeth. Often the driver does this work of mercy, and the dog will lie on his side or back, looking up piteously into his master's face. Sometimes little moose-skin moccasins are made, in shape like a miner's gold-poke, with a drawing-string at the top. These, fastened securely upon the dogs' feet, give them much relief, though it is hard for them to draw heavy loads, as the moccasins prevent their toes from gripping the trail. The lash, too, adds to the dogs' suffering. To a person who has never been on the trail, or in common parlance "mushed dogs," it may seem an unnecessary cruelty; but the truth is, they will not work at all unless the whip is used to a certain extent. There is a great difference, of course, between urging on the animals now and then with a sharp cut of the whip and ill-treating them as some drivers do. It is no uncommon thing for a brutal master to pound his dogs with a heavy stick, beating them until they are almost insensible. The curses of some men are terrible to listen to, and many contend that dogs will not travel without a string of oaths being hurled at them.

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A missionary some years ago in the Yukon held a service, at which only miners and prospectors were present. His subject was swearing, and he spoke about dog-driving. He appealed to them, and asked if it were not possible to drive dogs without cursing them. At this a hardy, husky miner rose to his feet, and looking calmly at the missionary, replied: "Your Reverence, it can't be done." Now this is all nonsense. It can be done, and dogs which are properly trained will travel just as well to the words, "Mush on," and "Hike on, there," as to all the choicest oaths in the English language.

The Bishop would never allow the dogs to be ill-treated in his presence; neither would he permit his men to swear at them. It was his usual custom to go ahead, on his long, springing snow-shoes, which sometimes are called "Northern slippers," and break down the trail. He was a man of great endurance, and day after day he kept the lead, sometimes till long after dark. "The ground is generally rough, and to walk in some places may be compared to what it would be to walk over the heads and shoulders of a crowd."

"Snow-shoe walking," says the Bishop, "requires care to avoid trouble. If the snow-shoe lashings, or any other bands, are too tight on the limbs, or if the feet are held too stiffly, a very painful affliction of the muscles supervenes, known as the snow-shoe sickness. This sickness sometimes causes the legs to swell like those of an elephant, and renders them so powerless that the feet may have to be lifted with the hand by lines attached to the front of the snow-shoes."

Day by day the dark forms moved on. All around was the pitiless waste. The terrible cold chilled to the bone. No sound broke the silence but the crunch, crunch of the snow-shoes, or the shouts of the drivers, the cracks of the whips, and the yelps of the dogs. At times they had to contend with driving storms, and only those who have been on the Northern trails can fully realize what they mean. Bishop Stringer, who spent many hard years within the Arctic Circle, vividly describes such as experience. He was travelling over a desolate region, away to the east, where the foot of white men had never before trod.

"It may appear," he says, "quite novel to travel over lands where no white man has ever been. The novelty wears off quickly, though, when one has to face the storms and isola-

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tion of those desolate wilds. I had as a guide a boy (the only one I could obtain from one of the villages) who was both deaf and stupid, and somewhat lazy. We had, of course, to carry our wood from the sea-coast, or do without any. We had a cotton tent that had seen many winters' rough usage, and a small stove made out of an old stove-pipe. By means of this we were able to keep warm while the wood lasted. When on the return trip our wood gave out, and we had to travel in the face of a blinding snowstorm, or freeze in the tent, and for part of the night we were hopelessly lost, and without any means of camping or getting ourselves warm, except by running. The boy gave out early, and while he sat on the sled, I had to run before the dogs, in the face of the storm, without track or guide of any kind. By keeping right into the wind I judged we were not far astray. I was quite glad, when the daybreak came, to find ourselves not far from the village."

It was always a great joy when Bishop Bompas and the men dragged their weary bodies into camp. Sometimes they had to travel over a barren stretch of country, and how eagerly they would watch ahead for a clump of trees in which to spend the night! But when camping time arrived, there was no warm house or steaming supper awaiting them—nothing but the silent trees, grim and desolate, surrounding them.

Having chosen a suitable spot with plenty of dry wood near, the snow was scraped away with a snow-shoe for a shovel. This place was thickly covered with fir, spruce, or pine branches, and a fire started from the shavings of dry wood or a piece of birch bark.

"If there are no pine," wrote the Bishop, "a fire can be made with dry willows. If these are lacking, evergreen willows are supposed to burn, when once ignited. Should there be none of these, there may probably be no fire, unless, as a last resort, a sledge can be chopped up for the purpose. There may be inconvenience also in the lack of materials for starting a fire. In the absence of sulphur matches, fire is commonly made with flint and steel and a piece of country touchwood, which consists of a fungoid growth or excrescence on the bark of the birch or poplar. A small particle of this touchwood is kindled to a spark with flint and steel, the touchwood is then placed on a handful of shavings cut from dry wood, and the whole is waved together in the air until it bursts into a

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flame. When a steel is missing, a knife may be at hand, or fire may be obtained by snapping a gun. An Indian chief has told of his life being saved at a last emergency by obtaining fire from a piece of greenstone, carried for a whetstone, and an iron buckle from his dog-harness."

After the fire was started, snow was melted in the kettles, for it is almost impossible to obtain water in any other way on the trail. The dogs are not fed until the end of the day. This may seem cruel ; but if fed before they are lazy, and will do very little work.

After supper was over, and the dogs fed, the moccasins and socks were hung up to dry, for they are always wet after a day's travel. Then the Bishop, sitting there, would bring out his little Bible, read a word of comfort, and offer up a few prayers to the great Father ; then, rolling themselves up in their blankets on the yielding boughs, close to the fire, they would take their well-earned rest. Sometimes they would awake to find the fire out and themselves covered with a soft white mantle of snow. Shortly after midnight they would arise and prepare for another long day's march. Such was their daily experience, and all the time the trail was getting more difficult.

The worst was yet to come. Much snow had fallen, and their progress was slower, and food running low. They were still a long distance from Fort Rae, and had therefore to place themselves on short allowances. Steadily their small supply of provisions diminished, until only a little was left ; then a mouthful apiece for hungry men and ravenous dogs. The latter did some hunting on their own account when the day's work was over, and fortunate were they to find a timid rabbit lurking near. Their keenness of scent is marvellous, especially when starving.

At length the food was all gone, and the tired, starving men looked at one another. What were they to do ? The Bishop straightened himself up, drew the girdle tighter about his waist, and pointed forward. He even smiled, for he could ever do that, even when his face was drawn and haggard. It was not the smile of scorn, but of trust. Ah ! he was being trained in a stern school for the great work which still lay before him. It was but one of the thousands of sufferings he endured, of which he would seldom speak. It was the Venerable Arch-deacon Canham who once found the Bishop in a lonely place

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with nothing to eat but a few tallow candles. Upon these he subsisted until he obtained proper food.

There was now nothing to do but drag on their weary steps. It was necessary, too, to assist the dogs, for the poor creatures were so weak that they could do but little. So on they pressed, and crunch, swish, sounded the snow-shoes. What a pitiful little procession wound its way through that white, cruel desolation ! The keen frost whitened their beards and eyebrows, singeing their faces, and chilling their hearts. And then the desolate camp at night, with nothing to eat !

But there was hope, and what will not men endure when they have even a spark of hope in their hearts ? They were drawing near to Fort Rae. At last the buildings hove into sight, and slowly and painfully they struggled in, faint and weary to the point of collapse. The dogs must have scented the settlement long before the men saw the place. They would smell the smoke in the air and take courage.

The Bishop's experience on this trip by no means prevented him from taking others. Shortly after his return from Fort Rae an incident happened which almost deprived the Church of its heroic missionary. He wished to visit Fort Norman, some 200 miles north of Fort Simpson, and made ready to travel in the dead of winter with several of the Hudson Bay Company's men, who were going that way. On the morning of the departure, Mrs. Bompas went to the Indian camp and asked the natives, who were to accompany the travellers, to look after the Bishop. "Are we not men ?" said one of them, Natsatt by name. "Is he not our Bishop ? Koka" (i.e. That's enough).

And so they started. But on this occasion the Bishop did not go ahead, as was his custom. He lagged behind the sled, travelling slower and slower all the time. Natsatt kept looking back, and when at length the Bishop disappeared from sight, he became alarmed. "Me no feel easy," he presently remarked ; "me not comfortable." Leaving the rest of the party, who swung on their way, he went back to look for the Bishop. Soon he found him, helpless, in the middle of the trail, bent double, with hands on his knees, trying to walk. He had been seized with fearful cramps, which were rendering him powerless. Natsatt made a fire as quickly as possible, and rubbed the Bishop thoroughly, and after the suffering man was well warmed, with a great effort succeeded in getting him back

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to the fort. The day was extremely cold—40 degrees below zero. A few minutes more, and the Bishop would have perished on the trail.

The Bishop loved the little ones of his dusky flock, and never was he so happy as when they were gathered around him. For long years he was their patient teacher, and gladly did he give up some of his time each day for their sake. Indian children are full of fun and mischief, and many were the pranks they would play upon their venerable teacher. Shrewd, too, were they to watch the effect of their capers. They knew they could go so far and no farther. When they saw the Bishop running his fingers through his hair they knew a storm was brewing, and silence would ensue.

During his long years in the North, over such a vast sweep of country, he had relieved and saved many a little waif. He could not bear to see them suffer, and sometimes his eyes were blinded to their imperfections. Once, hearing the sobs of a child who was being chastised, he marched to the school-room door and sought admittance. This not being complied with immediately, with a mighty push he drove open the door, seized the child from the teacher's grasp, and, placing it upon his knee, soothed it with parental affection.

The story of Jennie de Nord is one of much beauty and pathos, in which we see the Bishop risking his own life to save a little child. Old de Nord was a chief among the Fort Simpson Indians. He was a noted hunter and trapper, strong and stalwart, and a loving father to his four motherless children. Jennie was the only girl of the family, a regular little vixen, with sparkling black eyes and a merry roguish laugh.

For the first few years of her life Jennie was tended by an aunt, who lavished much affection upon the child. Jennie was then given to the care of another aunt, Takatse-mo by name, who was rather a stern woman, and had several children of her own to care for. She did not act kindly towards her new charge, and made her do very hard work, such as hauling water from the river, chopping wood for the camp-fire, and many other duties about the place. Besides this, Jennie was poorly fed. The little round cheeks grew thin, and a forlorn look appeared upon her usually merry face. While her relatives and neighbours were talking about this and wondering what to do, Jennie took the matter into

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her own hands, and one day suddenly disappeared from the camp. Her aunt did not worry herself at all about the girl's departure. She said she would come back when she felt hungry ; but Jennie did not come back. She had taken no food with her except a piece of hard, dried deer's meat ; neither did she have any outer covering beyond her small blanket, which had served her in early years, and was rather threadbare. The day after Jennie's flight the neighbours, and even the aunt, became much alarmed about her. The snow was deep around Fort Simpson, and starving wolves prowled about the woods. Their howls were often heard at night, and were responded to by the camp dogs.

At last it was resolved to consult the Bishop. " We must go after the child at once," was the reply, as soon as he heard the story ; and he immediately prepared to head the expedition. Snow-shoes and cloth leggings were made ready ; stout moccasins, and blankets, socks, fur cap, and other things necessary for the journey. Just a little more than half an hour after the news of Jennie's departure reached the mission-house, the Bishop and two Indians started off after the strayed waif. They found it difficult to trace her, as the previous night had been windy, and Jennie's tiny footprints were covered up. They imagined she had gone in search of her father, who was camped some distance away. Travelling in this direction, they had much difficulty in making their way through the tangled brushwood, and often they had to follow the river in order to make any progress at all. Here they met the piercing north-east wind, which cut their faces and formed icicles on beard and eyelashes. For ten miles they continued on their way without discovering any sign of Jennie. The Bishop felt much discouraged, and was thinking of returning to the Fort to try some other route. Suddenly one of the Indians uttered an exclamation, and pointed upwards to a faint column of smoke slowly rising among the dark fir-trees. New hope filled their hearts, and quickly climbing the banks of the stream, they made straight for the fire. Presently they caught sight of the clustered poles, which had been a wigwam, and there they found a little huddled form lying in one corner, clutching closely about her body the one poor frayed blanket. Opening her eyes, and seeing the Bishop bending over her, she uttered the pitiful word, " Ti-tin-tie "



THE FINDING OF JENNIE

Opening her eyes, and seeing the Bishop bending over her, she uttered the pitiful word "Ti-tin-tie" (I am hungry)

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(I am hungry). Jennie had walked more than ten miles, and reaching at last de Nord's halting-place, her strength had given out. Here she found her father's gun, which had been left in a cache loaded. This the girl had eagerly seized, and by firing it off obtained a spark which started the fire. By this she had crouched, trying to keep life in her body, when found by the rescuers. At once a roaring fire was blazing up. Water was brought, a cup of tea made for Jennie, and after a few hours' rest the party set out on their return trip to Fort Simpson. Jennie had to be carried most of the way, for she was not only much exhausted, but her shoes were almost worn out. In his strong arms the Bishop carried her part of the way, and how his heart must have rejoiced at finding the lost lamb! But the trip cost him much. His clothes were wet, for in places he had been forced to wade through overflowing water. He could hardly reach Fort Simpson, so great were the cramps which seized him, and for days he endured great suffering. But what did it matter? Jennie was safe, and none the worse for her experience.

If you wish to cross the Rocky Mountains to-day westward to the Pacific coast, there are the cars of the Canadian-Pacific Railway, in which you can travel in luxurious comfort and ease. As the train winds its way up to the summit, and crosses the Great Divide, and then creeps down, down the western slope, wonders without number are presented to view. Majestic snow-capped mountains surround you on every side; streams rush, leaping and foaming, like white threads far below, as the train hangs from some dizzy height, crawling around a jagged precipice. As you look down, and then shrink back at the wild scene below, you marvel at the skill of the engineers who could build a railroad in such a place. Then your mind turns to the men who first penetrated these wilds, and who were forced to cross the mountains before the railroad was built. What hardships they endured, what perils, and how many lives were lost in the undertaking! Hundreds of miles farther north Bishop Bompas performed this task years before the railroad was built, and at a season of the year when travelling over the mountains was very difficult.

While Bishop Bompas was carrying on his steady work along the great inland streams, a storm was brewing in an

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active mission centre on the Pacific coast; it is unnecessary to give the causes, but the Bishop was requested to act as arbitrator, which entailed a journey to Metlakahtla.

It was late in the season ere the letter reached the Bishop, but without delay he prepared for the trip. At any season it was a great undertaking, but at that time of the year the difficulty was very much increased. In a direct line the journey was a long one, but to reach the coast the distance was lengthened by a circuitous route over rivers, lakes, portages, and mountain summits.

Then winter was upon them.

"All the latter part of September," wrote the Bishop, "the frost and snow had been more severe than I had ever known it before at the same season, so the winter had decidedly the first start in our race."

It was a cold, frosty day, that 8th of October, 1877, when the Bishop left Dunvegan in a stout canoe, with several Indians, on his long race to the coast against stern winter. For five days they moved up the river, contending with drifting ice, which met them coming out of "tributary streams," and on the 13th Fort St. John's was reached, where they "were kindly entertained for the Sunday by the officer in charge" of the Hudson Bay post. From this point they left winter "behind for a fortnight, and were fairly ahead in the race." But every day they expected to be overtaken by their competitor, and arose from their "couches anxiously every morning, foreboding signs of ice or snow."

Rocky Mountain House was reached on the 17th, where a large band of Indians was found assembled. The Bishop lost no opportunity of speaking a word to the natives wherever he met them, and the seed thus sown bore much fruit in after years. For the first time he found no sickness in the camps, which fact he attributed "to their unusually liberal use of soap and water, as compared with the tribes farther north."

Ahead of them was the Peace River Canyon, and, after making a land portage of twelve miles to overcome this dangerous spot, they again proceeded by canoe. But the work was becoming harder all the time. The current was very swift, and the canoe had to be poled all the way. In trying to ascend the Parle Pas Rapids, the current was so "strong

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that their canoe turned on them, and was swept down the stream, but, being a large one, descended safely."

"Most of the time that we were passing through the gorge of the Rocky Mountains the weather was foggy, but when the mist cleared we saw the bold crags and hilly heights closely overhanging the river in snowy grandeur. The mountain terraces and picturesque scenery on this route have been described by Canadian explorers."

"On the very morning that we left Parsnip River," wrote the Bishop, "the ice began again to drift thickly to meet us, and had we been only a few hours later, we might have been inconvenienced by it, showing us that stern winter was still on our track."

For eleven days the Bishop and his men poled their craft against the stream, and, with many dangers passed, reached McLeod's Lake Fort on October 29. Here they were hospitably received by Mr. McKenzie, the officer in charge, and an opportunity was given to see the Indians who were at the fort. A rest of two days was made here, and then they started across the lake. This was a difficult task, as the ice was beginning to stretch from shore to shore, and they had to force their way as best they could around the corner of the solid mass.

From Lake McLeod a long portage of eighty miles was made over frozen ground to the beautiful sheet of water known as Stuart Lake, on the shore of which the officer at Fort St. James gave them a hearty welcome.

A stay of four days was made at this place, during which time heavy snowstorms raged over the land, and ice began to form in the lake, which threatened to bar further progress. This body of water, which is about fifty miles in length, had to be traversed, and the Indians refused to make the long journey at that season and in such weather.

After much difficulty the Indians were persuaded to go forward, and, leaving Fort St. James on November 7, started out upon their perilous journey. Safely crossing Lake Stuart, they made a portage of seven and a half miles to Lake Babine. This is a body of water eighty-seven miles long and from one-half to five or six miles wide. The canoes here were poor affairs, owing to the lack of large cedar trees, from which such crafts are made on the Pacific coast. They

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were common dug-outs, formed from the cotton-wood trees—small, narrow, slab-sided, and as a rule much warped and out of shape.

This was all the Bishop could obtain to make the voyage, but he was used to anything, even a raft, so, launching the frail craft, they again started forward. When they had gone part of the way a furious snowstorm swept down upon them, blotting out the landscape, while the white-capped waves threatened every instant to engulf them. Creeping along the lee-side of the lake, they pressed steadily on, for the Bishop must reach the coast before the winter locked everything tight. After days of hard paddling and battling with wind and waves, their hearts were gladdened by the sight of Fort Babine. The Indians here, who, by the way, were Roman Catholics, were naturally suspicious of a Church of England missionary. "However," remarked the Bishop, "they treated us well."

These Indians were called "Babines" from the custom they had of wearing a wooden lip-piece on the lower lip.

From Fort Babine they started on the land-trail over the mountains to Skeena Forks. This was a difficult undertaking, and winter overtook them once again. Beginning the portage, the snow was several inches deep, and as they ascended the mountain it deepened continually, till they were forced to dig out their camps, "to sleep in a foot and a half of snow, and without snow-shoes the walking was heavy. We were invading winter's own domain," continued the Bishop, "and it was little wonder if he was severe with us."

As they descended the western slope the next morning, the snow diminished rapidly, and they "camped at night in the grass without a vestige of snow remaining, and only saw stern winter frowning down from the heights behind."

On reaching the Skeena Forks they were given a hearty welcome by Mr. Hankin, a trader who lived here, who informed the Bishop that, till the previous year, the Skeena River had never been known to continue open so late, being generally frozen the first week in November, and now it was the 17th. The next day the descent of the Skeena was begun by canoe in fear and trembling, lest the ice might "drift down from behind." And the race began in earnest, for a heavy snowstorm swept over the land, and winter once more made a

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last effort to block them. But through the tempest sped the determined missionary, through rapids and canyons, over bars, whirling eddies, and dangers without number. At last, to his joy, he found that, on nearing the coast, the mild breezes of the Pacific were too much for grim winter, and he steadily retreated, leaving the little party unscathed.

At Port Essington, the little town at the mouth of the Skeena, Mr. Morrison, the missionary in charge, one day, November 23, saw a stranger approaching in a canoe. His clothes were torn and ragged, his face bronzed from wind and sun, while his long, uncombed beard swept his breast. So travel-worn was the man that Mr. Morrison mistook him for a miner as he disembarked. "Well," said he, "what success have you had?" The Bishop replied that he had been fairly successful, evidently relishing the joke. Just then Mr. Morrison saw the remains of the episcopal apron, and, remembering that he had heard that a Bishop was expected at Metlakahtla from inland, exclaimed: "Perhaps you are the Bishop who I heard was expected?" "Yes," was the reply, "I am all that is left of him."

After spending one night with Mr. Morrison, the Bishop proceeded twenty-five miles by canoe along the coast northward to Metlakahtla, which he reached on the 24th, "this being the tenth canoe," he remarks, "that we sat in since leaving Dunvegan."

Life in the northland is hard and lonely enough at the best; but when food gives out, and starvation stares people in the face, it is too horrible even to imagine. And yet it is a common thing during the long winters, when game is scarce, when no fish are to be caught, and even the little rabbits die, for famine to stalk through the land, bringing misery and death to hundreds of men, women, and children.

Both whites and Indians suffer at such times. In 1878, the Bishop returned from his visit to the Pacific coast. When he reached his diocese, sad stories were told him of the fearful famine which had ravaged his flock the previous winter. Food was scarce, owing to the extreme mildness of the season interfering with the chase, and the mission supplies having failed to reach them in the fall. He gives a graphic picture of the sufferings endured in the diocese:

"Horses were killed for food, and furs eaten at several of



"IN DANGERS OFT"

Through the tempest sped the determined missionary, through rapids and canyons, over bars, whirling eddies, and dangers without number.



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the posts. The Indians had to eat a good many of their beaver-skins. Imagine an English lady taking her supper off her muff! The gentleman now here with me supported his family for a while on bear-skins—those you see at home mostly in the form of Grenadier caps. Can you fancy giving a little girl, a year or two old, a piece of Grenadier's cap."

It was not only at one place or one season that the famine came. It was a common occurrence. Once, in 1886, the Bishop held his Synod at Fort Simpson. There was a scarcity of food, the beginning of the great famine which ensued, and all were placed on short allowance. One day the dinner consisted of barley and a few potatoes, but it is said that the Bishop was equal to the occasion, commending the scanty fare by repeating Proverbs xv, 17: "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

The winter that followed the meeting of the clergy was a terrible one. The famine increased. Game was scarce, few moose were to be obtained, the rabbits all died, and the fish nearly all left the river. The Indians asserted that the scarcity of the finny prey was caused by the propeller of the new steamer *Wrigley*, which first churned the head-waters of the great river the preceding fall, but was unable to reach the northern posts owing to the ice; hence the lack of supplies. But any excuse would serve the Indians, as, on a previous occasion when fish were scarce (so Mrs. Bompas tells us), the natives said it was due to the white women bathing in the river. Such a radical change as cleanliness was evidently as much disliked by the fish as by the Indians.

The mission party were placed on half rations, and earnest prayers were offered up to the great Father above for deliverance. Starving wolves were seen prowling around, ready to snatch up anything, carrying off little children if they ventured near. "We are just hanging on by our eyelashes," quaintly wrote Mrs. Bompas.

The Bishop starved himself to feed his household, and daily he became thinner and more haggard. At last the provisions were so reduced that the Bishop, to lessen the number at the Fort, left for another place. He seldom thought of himself, but only of those dependent upon him. He could live anywhere, even in a snow-bank, with a few scraps of food. Truly his wants were few.

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"An iron cup, plate, or knife," writes Mr. Spendlove, "with one or two kettles, form his culinary equipment. A hole in the snow, a corner of a boat, wigwam, or log-hut, provided space, six feet by two feet, for sleeping accommodation. Imagine him seated on a box in a twelve-foot room, without furniture, and there cooking, teaching, studying, early and late, always at work, never at ease, never known to take a holiday."

Mrs. Bompas tells us that the Bishop was a very self-contained man. During the years when he was itinerating among the Indians and Eskimo he had lived so much alone in tent or cabin that he had learnt to be wholly independent of external aid. Moreover, he had trained himself to endure hardness as a good soldier of the Cross. His diet was at all times abstemious, almost severely so. To the last he never allowed himself milk or cream in tea or coffee. He was a fairly good cook and bread-maker, and loved to produce a good and savoury dish for his friends, although eschewing all such dainties himself.

To add to the misery of famine, there was always the horror of darkness; for candles became very scarce, owing to lack or thinness of deer, from which grease is obtained. Over and over again Mrs. Bompas laments the want. And what a joy it was even to obtain a "bladder of grease"!

These, then, are some of the hardships the missionaries have to undergo in that far-off land, in order to carry the Gospel message to the natives of the North. Much do they need our prayers and sympathy in their great loneliness, that they may not faint, but carry forward the banner of the Master.

In May, 1881, he began those marvellous trips which only a giant constitution could have endured. From the Peace River district he made a voyage far north to visit the Tukudh Indians. Here he was given a hearty welcome, and rejoiced to find that the natives had begun to teach one another to read from the books which had been printed for their benefit. An Indian from the far-off Yukon came all the way to see him at this place, and urged him to go again and visit his tribe. The Bishop was standing by a smouldering camp-fire listening to the native pleading for his people. Suddenly the Indian pointed downwards to the dying coals at their feet.

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"That," he said, "is how you have left us. You kindled the fire of the Gospel among us, and left it untended to die out again. Why have you done this?"

The Bishop was much moved. He longed to go to them, or to send some one in his place, but his men were very few, and he himself was needed farther south. So, after spending the summer among these noble Tukudhs, travelling from May to August 2500 miles, he returned to Great Slave Lake to meet an incoming mission party from England. After that he went up the turbulent Liard River from Fort Simpson to visit two forts there—Liard and Nelson.

Winter was close upon him when he once again got back to Fort Simpson. Mrs. Bompas was at Fort Norman, 200 miles away, and he must reach that place as soon as possible, to relieve her of the responsibility of the mission work.

Arriving at Fort Simpson, he found the river full of floating ice, and no canoe could navigate that cruel stream in such a condition. He was urged to remain there where it was comfortable; it would be madness to go forward. But no, that was not the Bishop's way; he would go, no matter how great the difficulties.

A raft was therefore hurriedly built. This was a poor affair—only a few logs placed side by side, and several poles or boards across the top to hold them together. Even the sturdy Vikings of olden days would have shrunk from venturing forth on such a craft; but the Bishop was greater than they. He had not only the courage of the Vikings, but the holy enthusiasm of St. Paul, and these two virtues formed a combination which could accomplish almost any undertaking.

With one Indian he started from Fort Simpson upon his shaky craft. With long poles in their hands they steered their way down the stream. The floating ice jammed around them, threatening to crush their tiny craft and engulf them in a watery grave. At times they were standing in water half-way up to the knees, owing to the pressure of some heavy blocks of ice. Then, as they handled their long poles, the water ran down their sleeves and drenched their bodies. The cold wind whistled about them, and froze the water upon their clothes till they were covered with an icy armour. The mittens on their hands became wet, then stiff and frozen, while ice formed on the poles, making them heavy and slippery. At

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night there was the camp-fire upon the shore, the brief rest, and then up and on again, for they must rush through before the river became solid from bank to bank.

Thus every day they battled on, chilled to the bone and ever in danger, yet never giving up. But stern winter knew no mercy. Colder and colder it grew, until at last the icy bridge was formed, to remain during long, dreary months. Then they were forced to abandon the raft, and fortunate were they to find shelter at a place on the side of the stream known as La Violdete's House. Here the Bishop remained for ten days, until the ice in the river was strong enough to travel upon. At the end of that time he and four Indians started on foot for Fort Norman. They hoped to reach it in six days, and took just enough food to last them for that period. One of the Indians, seeing the tracks of a bear, went off in pursuit, and lost sight of the others entirely.

The Bishop and his three remaining companions pushed steadily forward. But, alas! they missed the right trail, and by the time they should have reached Fort Norman it was still six days' journey off. When they at length found out their mistake their food was very low, and they were forced to place themselves on short allowance. Wearily they plodded onward, beating their way through tangled bushes and tramping through the snow. Their feet, too, became sore, for the rough ground, covered with sharp stones and snags, tore their moccasins, and caused them to stumble and sometimes to fall.

At length they ate their last scrap of food—a fish and one small barley-cake between four starving men. Fort Norman was still two days' hard travelling ahead, and they must make it, or perish there in the wilderness. The Bishop was becoming very weak and footsore. His continual travelling and hardships since May were telling upon him. How he longed to stop, to just lie down under some tree, and rest, rest! But no, that would be fatal! His flock needed him, and he must not give up. So with firmly compressed lips, and face drawn and haggard, he stumbled on, trying to keep pace with his more sturdy companions.

But even the Bishop's splendid will could not conquer his worn body. His feet refused to move, and he sank exhausted upon the snow. "Leave me here," he said to the Indians; "I can go no further. You push on and send me back some

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food." There was nothing else to do, for men in desperate circumstances cannot stand upon ceremony. So, building a fire under one of the trees, and spreading some fir boughs on the ground, the Indians once again started forward.

And there in the lone wilderness the faithful Bishop was left, perhaps to die. Suppose the Indians, too, should give out ere they reached the Fort! What then? Or suppose prowling, hungry wolves should find him. Then, in either case, another name would be added to the long list of noble men and women who had given their lives for the Master's sake.

One night towards the middle of November, Mrs. Bompas was aroused from sleep and much startled by loud knockings upon the door. Trembling, and fearing for the Bishop, she demanded who was there. "We bring you tidings of the Bishop," came the reply. "He is starving."

It did not take Mrs. Bompas long to spring from her bed and examine the two Indians as to the truth of their report. When she heard of her husband's pitiable condition her heart sank very low. At the same time there came the thought and firm belief that the Arms which had shielded him through so many dangers would befriend him still.

She well knew there was no time to lose, and her first effort was to induce one of the men, Whu-tale by name, to take relief to the Bishop. Though this Indian was not one of the starving party, he had learned the story from the three who had straggled, half-starved, into the Fort, and had hurried off with another to carry the tale to the mission-house. Mrs. Bompas knew he could be trusted to go in search of the Bishop, and with Indian sagacity would find the place.

"Whu-tale," she said, "Bishop is starving in the woods. I send him meat. Chiddi, chiddi!" (Quick, quick!). "You take it to him, eh?" But Whu-tale did not like the idea of starting out at that time of the night on such a long errand, and doubtfully shook his head. "Maybe to-morrow," he replied, with true Indian passiveness.

"No, Whu-tale," urged the anxious woman. "To-morrow the Bishop must be here. He cannot stand until he has eaten meat. I want you to take it now, and go to him like the wind. If you go directly and bring Bishop safe, I will give you a fine flannel shirt."

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At this Whu-tale grew interested. Though the Bishop's sufferings did not appeal to him, the offer of the flannel shirt moved him, and a little more briskly he remarked: "Then, it would not be hard for me to go, and perhaps like the wind."

Having accomplished this much, Mrs. Bompas had still stern work ahead. Wrapped in a deer-skin robe, she emerged from the house and climbed the hill to the Fort, and aroused the Hudson Bay Company's officer from a sound sleep to obtain a supply of moose-meat. The thermometer was nearly 30 degrees below zero, and starving wolves had been recently seen lurking near the Fort. She thought of neither one nor the other, but only of her husband, out alone in the night.

At last Whu-tale was ready, and much rejoiced was she to see him start off on his errand of mercy. All the next day she waited with anxiety. After darkness had set in, the travelers appeared, trudging along on snow-shoes, weary and foot-sore, her husband looking hardly able to stand, and with his beard all fringed with icicles.

We have seen how when Mr. Bompas was consecrated Bishop of the Diocese of Athabasca, he had charge of a vast region of one million square miles. In 1883, finding the field too large, he had it divided, the northern portion being called Mackenzie River, which the Bishop took as his own. Here he carried on the work east and west of the Rocky Mountains for several years. But finding the task too great for one man—owing partly to the influx of miners along the Yukon River—he again had a division made in 1890, the region west of the mountains thus becoming the Diocese of Selkirk (now Yukon). Archdeacon Reeve became Bishop of the Mackenzie River Diocese, while Bishop Bompas decided to go into the regions beyond across the mountains.

Leaving Fort Norman, he went again across the Rocky Mountains, and spent the winter of 1891-92 at the lonely rampart-house. He did not mind the loneliness, for he spent the time at his beloved studies. In the spring, when the snow had disappeared from the land, he would walk through the woods drinking in the beautiful things of Nature.

In the spring, after the ice had gone out, he went down the Porcupine River to the Yukon. It was here he met Mrs. Bompas, who was returning from England. They had not met since 1887, and Mrs. Bompas vividly describes this meeting.

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After speaking about the trip up the river from St. Michael's, she mentions the great excitement which ensued on July 26, when "two Indians came on board, bringing news of the Bishop, who is at the next village, 'Showman.' But a delay took place owing to the boiler being cleaned, and it was not until midnight that 'two bells' sounded, a signal for the boat to stop. I pricked up my ears, and then another bell, which meant, 'Stop her.' It must be for wood, of course; but I sprang from my berth, and looked out of my small window to see a pretty Indian camp, and —my husband on the beach, grey and weather-beaten, but in health better than I had expected!"

From here they went up the river to Forty Mile, where there was a large camp of miners and Indians. In a log-house the Bishop and his faithful wife took up their new burden among complete strangers. Their special work was among the Indians, and for the children a school was at once started. There was much to do about the place—repairs of all kinds to be made, and the Bishop was kept very busy.

Many were the wants the good Bishop relieved. He always kept a store of medicine in the house, and became quite expert in his knowledge of Indian troubles. To them he was doctor as well as teacher, and they always turned to him in time of trouble. He was tireless even to the last in his attendance upon sick persons. Sometimes he even performed surgical operations. With nothing but a pocket-knife he has been known to sever a diseased toe or thumb of some member of his dusky flock. Once he cut off a man's leg with a common hand-saw, and the man is living and able to work to-day.

One spring, east of the mountains, he was public vaccinator. Smallpox was raging, and the previous summer over two thousand Indians are said to have died. The Bishop found at times much trouble in persuading the natives to submit to the operation, but, in spite of difficulties, he vaccinated about five hundred.

He had himself suffered from snow-blindness, and knew how painful it was. When he saw many of his flock thus afflicted, his heart was moved, and he did his best to relieve them. He had never studied at a medical college, but his keen powers of observation and the study of some of the standard medical books that he had always at hand stood him in good stead on many an occasion. He had witnessed

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so often the sufferings endured by his flock owing to snow-blindness in the spring that, when he returned home for consecration, he took advantage of the visit to attend several lectures at an eye hospital, and was henceforth able to treat the patients who came to him with splendid success.

So now at Forty Mile the Indians came to him with all kinds of troubles. Not only did the women and children need his attention, but the men of the flock as well. Though many were quiet, and gave little or no trouble, there were always others of a turbulent nature. Of these the Bishop had no fear. He never hesitated to speak the word of rebuke, or to interfere in order to stop a fight.

One day two Indians became engaged in a serious fight close by the mission. One, Roderick by name, was determined to kill the other, and was making desperate thrusts with a long, sharp knife. The Bishop, observing the encounter, made for the contestants, and taking Roderick by the collar, quietly said, "Come." But the Indian still fought and slashed with his knife, the Bishop all the time retaining his hold, and saying, "Come, come with me." After much effort he succeeded in separating them, and half leading, half dragging, drew Roderick to the mission-house. Then the Indian, completely exhausted, sank upon a large stone near by. Ere long he began to realize how he had been saved from committing murder, and reaching out his hand, seized that of the Bishop to thank him for what he had done.

As the miners continued to arrive, the Bishop became much worried over the change that took place among his Indians. Then the white men exerted a baneful influence upon his Indians, demoralizing them through drink and in many other unlawful ways.

Though the miners, for the most part, were a hard-working, well-meaning class of men, there were a few who were bent on mischief and playing practical jokes. Some of these latter, at times, proved more serious than they anticipated. Observing the venerable Bishop moving steadily about his daily work, with his thoughts on higher things, they imagined it would be a fine idea to spring upon him a practical joke. So one day a man with a very serious face came to the mission-house and asked the Bishop to bury a certain miner who had recently died. This the Bishop agreed to do at the appointed hour. When

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the man had departed, some one remarked that it was strange that they had not heard of the man's illness. At this the Bishop became suspicious, so, going to the white settlement, he asked a store-keeper 'here when the man had died. "He is not dead," was the reply. "Some of the boys wanted to have a little fun and watch you read the Burial Service over an empty box."

Notwithstanding certain jokes of this kind, the miners had the profoundest respect for the Bishop and his devoted wife. Though many of them were indifferent to all things spiritual, still, they could admire nobleness when they beheld it, as they did every day in the two faithful soldiers of the Cross in their midst. As a token of their esteem, on Christmas Day, 1892, a splendid nugget of gold was presented to Mrs. Bompas.

It was at Forty Mile, in the lonely days before the words "Klondyke" and "Yukon" thrilled the whole world, when the noble Bishop was caring for his little flock at this far northern mission station. The winter had been a long, trying one, and eagerly all were awaiting the coming of spring, when the snow would melt from the land, the birds fill the air with their music, and the ice in the great river would rush roaring down to the sea.

Day after day they watched and waited. When would the ice go? The eager little dusky faces of the mission children were often pressed against the panes, waiting to catch the first glimpse of the movement. Occasionally the Bishop rose from his rude desk, strode to the door, and stood looking anxiously up-stream. He knew better than the little ones what the going out of the ice might mean to them. They were on an island cut off from the mainland by a small creek, or what is called in this country a "slough." He had heard stories from the Indians of bygone days when the ice had jammed below and flooded the whole island, while huge blocks of ice rushed along, sweeping down everything before them. At times they became stranded, and remained there long after the waters had subsided, grim witnesses of the terrible time.

Thus all day long they watched and waited. Towards evening a shout was raised: "The ice is going! The ice is going!" and all rushed to see a wonder which, once beheld, can never fade from the memory.

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"Huge blocks," says an eye-witness, "would get squeezed up by the pressure of still larger ones coming down behind them. Then the block in front would dart swiftly forward, like a greyhound slipped from the leash, and the great, tearing mass behind would sink and disappear, to come rolling up again half a mile farther down. On they went, tumbling over one another in their haste and gladness to be free: down to the bottom; up again into the air, grinding the sponge-ice to powder; blocked up for a moment, then whirled on again, until they themselves were pulverized, or hurled on to the bank, or reached a clear space where they might for a few hundred yards float onward more peacefully."

Having watched the grand sight for some time, and feeling the danger of a flood was now over, the Bishop and his household retired to rest, after commending themselves to the great Father's keeping. But little were they aware that down where the Forty Mile River flows into the Yukon a jam was being formed; and the ice and water thus impeded began to rise and overflow the banks. Unconscious of the danger, those in the mission-house slept on. Presently they were awakened by the terrible sound of water sweeping around them, and rushing through the house. The Bishop sprang from his bed, lighted a candle, and moved downstairs. Here he found the floor covered with water, which was steadily rising. Thinking not of himself, nor of his books, but only of the helpless little ones upstairs, he waded through the icy water, and, seizing what provisions he could lay his hands upon, carried them upstairs. He did not know how long they might be kept there, and the children must not starve.

Rapidly the water rose, flooding all the furniture downstairs, the little organ, and the books which were on the lower shelves.

There was nothing else to do but to remain upstairs and see what would happen. The children huddled around, trembling with fear, and listening to the roaring outside, and the water rushing through the house. The Bishop, strong and calm, tried to soothe their fears, speaking words of kindness and comfort. He could trust when the little ones feared, for had he not often been in the midst of so many great dangers? and the Master had delivered him out of them all. No doubt he thought of his peril upon the raft on the Mackenzie River,

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amid drifting ice, his danger among the Eskimo, and his many other wonderful escapes, of which he seldom spoke. He would think, too, of the time his canoe was wrecked, and he and his companions were saved as by a miracle, the details of which he never told.

Higher and higher rose the water. It crept up the stairs, inch by inch, step by step. Oh, what a cruel, cruel monster it was, reaching up its icy fingers to clutch the little band above ! How much higher would it come ? Would it reach the upper floor ? If so, what then ? Besides the water, there was the danger of the floating ice. At any instant a huge block might surge against the building and sweep it away like a toy house of cards.

While the little band huddled there, anxious eyes were peering through the darkness. A few members of the mounted police were pacing up and down the shore, listening to the roaring flood and thinking of those in danger on the island. As the water steadily rose, they hesitated no longer, but, launching their two stout canoes, started to the rescue. Moving up the narrow creek or slough, which was somewhat protected from the ice, they reached a position directly opposite the back of the mission-house, several hundred yards away. But now their work began in real earnest, for across that rushing flood, mid blocks of ice, and through the darkness, it was necessary to guide their craft. It needed courage and muscles of steel to accomplish the task, but when once these sturdy guardians make up their mind to do a thing, there is no turning back ; whether it be fire, frost, or flood, they press straight forward. So now, in the face of these difficulties, they moved on foot by foot, sometimes feeling the keels grinding on a piece of floating ice, or again being swept back by a whirling eddy. But advance they did, and at length reached the house. It was impossible to gain admittance by the door ; the water was too high for that. They shouted, and from a window upstairs came the Bishop's glad response. Swinging the canoes to this side of the house, they held them close ; the children were all lowered one by one out of the window, to be received by the strong arms below. Then came the Bishop, the last to leave.

Swept onward with the current, they were all borne safely across the waters and landed upon the mainland. Full of joy and gratitude was the Bishop's heart at the rescue which had been made.

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When morning broke over the land the waters had subsided, and the river was clear of ice. The mission-house was still standing, but all around huge blocks of ice lay stranded, where they remained for many days. The mission-house was in a lamentable condition. Everything was soaked, but what did it signify so long as all were saved?

Seldom did any man have such an excited throng thrust upon him in so short a time as did Bishop Bompas. While he was steadily and quietly carrying on his Master's work at Forty Mile, a stir which was to thrill the whole world was taking place in a certain portion of his diocese.

Through all this excitement Bishop Bompas was living quietly at Forty Mile. He watched the living stream of eager gold-seekers hurrying by through the summer and winter. Many were the wants he supplied, and the weary men he assisted with food and clothing. But the gold fever did not possess him.

During this mad rush the Bishop was not idle. He was planning how the Church might be brought to these miners. He himself was not accustomed to work among white people, and did not feel equal to the task. But there was a man upon whom he could depend at this critical time. This was the Rev. R. J. Bowen, who had recently arrived from England. To him, therefore, the Bishop stated his plans, and as soon as possible Mr. Bowen started up the river to plant the standard of Christ in that excited camp of gold-seekers.

A log church was at first built, and called "St. Paul's." When Dawson grew to be a large city, this was replaced by a new frame church which cost \$14,000. The Bishop was worried about his work, and this worry, together with improper food, brought on a severe attack of scurvy, and when he went back to Forty Mile in April, he was in a very weak condition. Yet, notwithstanding his illness, he persisted in conducting the Indian school and attending to his correspondence.

"I cannot move," he wrote, "without losing my breath, nor walk a few steps without great pain. If I can hold on till I obtain green vegetables, they may benefit me."

After a time "green vegetables" reached him from Dawson, and at once an improvement took place. To these the Bishop declared his recovery was almost entirely due.

Mrs. Bompas, during this trying season, was at Fort Yukon,

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unable to reach the Bishop. She had been summoned to England, to the bedside of her sister, who was dangerously ill. On her return to San Francisco, after a few months' absence, she found that wild excitement reigned, owing to the Klondyke gold discovery.

"The miners," continues Mrs. Bompas, "were looking eagerly forward to the gold-mines of the Klondyke, when the whole load of passengers were set ashore, and the captain announced that he was not going a step farther. Prayers, entreaties, and remonstrances were unavailing. He gave no excuse for his conduct but that he was going back immediately to St. Michael—it was supposed, to lay in a cargo of whisky."

And at Fort Yukon Mrs. Bompas was stranded for eight long months, thirty miles within the Arctic Circle. Fortunately, the Rev. John Hawkesly and family were stationed here, who did what they could for her comfort. But to the Bishop at Forty Mile, in feeble health, disturbing news arrived of the riotous times among the miners at Fort Yukon, and their desperate efforts to overpower the American soldiers. Such information caused him much anxiety, and most thankful was he when at length the ice ran out of the river, and Mrs. Bompas was able to continue her way after the long delay.

The following summer the Bishop turned his attention to the southern part of his diocese. Word had reached him of stirring towns on Lake Bennett and Lake Atlin. Thinking them to be in his jurisdiction, he made the long and difficult journey up-stream to view the land. Reaching Bennett during the summer of 1899, he was astonished to see a flourishing city containing thousands of people. But greater still was his surprise to find that Bennett and Atlin were in British Columbia, and that he had gone several miles beyond his diocese. His stay was very brief at Bennett, and on his return trip down the river he spent two days among the Indians at Tagish, gaining much information concerning these natives and their language.

The following winter Bishop Bompas remained at the Indian village of Moosehide, and, amidst school labour and diocesan cares, formed plans for important extension of the mission-work.

Years of strenuous work were telling upon his gigantic

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constitution, and he began to realize that ere long he must lay down the staff of office. For some time his attention was drawn towards the southern portion of the diocese, to the Indians who were gathered at Caribou Crossing, which had become quite an important railway centre. In August, 1901, he and Mrs. Bompas bade farewell to all at Forty Mile, and started on their journey up the river. Whitehorse was only in its infancy, and the Rev. R. J. and Mrs. Bowen had just returned from England to take charge of the Church work. In their little tent they received the venerable couple, and did all in their power to minister to their comfort. The welcome at Caribou Crossing was most meagre. A tent which belonged to Bishop Ridley gave them shelter for a few hours, when, hearing of a bunkhouse across the river, they at once rented it, and afterwards purchased it for \$150. It was dirty and uncomfortable, but the Bishop placed a rug and blanket on the big table for Mrs. Bompas to rest while he went to explore. The house was infested with gophers, which ran along the rafters, causing great annoyance.

In 1903, Bishop Ridley, of Caledonia, paid a visit to Caribou Crossing on his way to Atlin. The description he gives of the episcopal residence and the life of the venerable occupants is most interesting, a few extracts of which must be given here :

“There on the platform stands the straight and venerable hero of the North, Dr. Bompas, the Bishop of Selkirk. I jumped from the train and, though I had never met him before, I grasped his hand and exclaimed, ‘At last ! at last !’ We knew each other well by letter only. He was as placid as the mountains and the lakes they embosom.”

Then a glimpse is given of the “Bishop’s house, built of logs, on the sand. The flooring-boards were half an inch apart, so shrunken were they that it would be easy to rip them up and lay them down close together. Then the roof : it was papered, with battens across the paper. I was anxious to see inside less of the light of heaven through the rents. Ventilation is carried to excess. Everything around is as simple as indifference to creature comforts can make it, excepting the books, which are numerous, up to date, and as choice as any two excellent scholars could wish.”

Anxious days followed the Bishop’s removal to this place. Then followed the death of his old friend Archbishop Machray,

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and as senior Bishop of the province of Rupert's Land, he was summoned to Winnipeg.

The Bishop's time was fully occupied during his stay in Winnipeg. There were old friends calling upon him, reporters seeking interviews, meetings to attend, and addresses to deliver, which wearied him very much.

The city life did not agree with him. He longed for his Northern flock and the quietness of his little log-house at Caribou Crossing. A doctor was consulted, who strongly advised him not to return to his diocese for some time. Before this the Bishop was uncertain when he would return; but after the doctor's verdict had been given, he hesitated no longer, but fixed a date for his departure. Only three weeks did he stay in Winnipeg, and then started northward. Acts of kindness were showered upon him on every hand. All delighted to honour the noble missionary in their midst. As he stood on the platform before leaving Winnipeg, an unknown friend, knowing that the Bishop would not afford himself the luxury of a good berth, slipped into his hand a ticket for one in the Pullman car.

When once again in his own diocese, the longing grew stronger for rest, and he became impatient for the time when his successor would be appointed. His annual trip down the river to visit the various mission stations became more and more of a burden, and he wished to stay quietly in one place to carry on his desired work.

For some time the Bishop wished to change the name of Caribou Crossing, as his letters often went to other places of a similar name, and thus caused much delay and confusion. After careful consideration, he chose the name of "Carcross." Many objected to the change, and strongly worded articles were written in the local paper condemning the "mongrel name of Carcross." The Bishop remained silent, replying to none of these attacks. At length a letter appeared, addressed to the Bishop, from the Secretary of the Geographic Board of Canada, stating that at a meeting of the Board "the name 'Carcross' was approved instead of 'Caribou' or 'Caribou Crossing.'" The Bishop smiled, but said nothing. Since then the new name has steadily won its way.

The building of the new church at Carcross was a great comfort to the Bishop. In the erection of this little building

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the Bishop was most active, not only superintending the work, but doing much manual labour himself. With his own hands he made a little gate for the church-door, to keep out the numerous Indian dogs which were always prowling around during service. This specimen of the Bishop's handiwork remained for some time after his death a curiosity to all who looked upon it, especially to tourists.

It was a happy day when at last the church was opened for service. It was consecrated on August 8th, 1904, after Mrs. Bompas's return to the diocese. The services were of a very simple nature, for the Bishop seemed to have an almost complete disregard for external things. Seldom did he wear his episcopal robes—not even when visiting the different mission stations in his diocese—being content to use the long white surplice with the black stole, minus his Doctor's hood. This was a cause of worry to Mrs. Bompas, who rejoiced to see all things done “decently and in order.”

Anxiously the Bishop awaited Bishop Stringer's return from Winnipeg to take charge of the diocese. No jealousy came into his heart at the thought of handing over the work to another. It was his own wish, for he knew a younger and stronger man was needed. For himself, he did not wish to leave the Yukon or to retire. He resolved to still carry on his Master's work as a humble missionary much further down the river. He was eager to be away among his dusky flock, free from all the cares of the huge diocese, which were becoming a great burden.

At length Bishop Stringer arrived, and at once he handed over the affairs to him, and discussed his own plans with the enthusiasm of youth, little thinking that the Master of Life was about to call him to a higher service.

In a famous picture an old warrior, scarred in many a fierce battle, is seen hanging up his sword ; his work ended, he could afford to rest. But not so with Bishop Bompas, the faithful soldier of the Cross. No thought of ease entered his mind, but only more work for the Master. As St. Paul of old handed on his commission to his son Timothy, so did this veteran apostle of a later day pass on the torch to a younger son in the faith, that he might be free for other work. Then came the end, the last scene in the life of this noble man, for “God's finger touched him, and he slept.”

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Such a calm, such a change from turmoil into peace, marked the evening of the life we have been considering. We believe that God's servants have been given a premonition of the approach of death. The Bishop had laid his plans some months ahead, and made necessary preparations for a winter down the river. He had always been remarkable for physical strength and energy. For his winter travelling he was always seen running, with the jaunty pace of the Northern tripper, ahead of his sledge. He was ever ready to help the men hauling up a boat at some of the portages, or in pushing it down the bank into the river. Among his party it was always the Bishop who insisted on charging himself with the heaviest articles, and it was only within the last two years that he abstained from hauling water from the lake for the whole of that household. But symptoms of some diminution of strength and vigour in this strong man were beginning to show themselves. The eyes that had pored so long with imperfect light over the pages of Hebrew and Syriac, in which he so delighted, were failing, and had to be strengthened by glasses stronger and yet stronger still. Since his last attack of scurvy he had lost all sense of smell or taste. No one could be with the Bishop many hours without observing an expression of weariness and dejection in his countenance, which was as intense as pathetic. He was often heard whispering, "Courage, courage!" To more than one of his friends he had given his impression that he had not long to live.

The Bishop's burden of responsibility had of late years been greatly increased by the advent of the white men. The population of the diocese had increased sevenfold and at rapid strides. The problem of providing for the spiritual needs of these people, and especially of keeping the Indians from the allurements of the whisky traffic and the snares of the gambling-table, was weighing heavily upon him. But the darkest hour is the hour before the dawn; the labourer's task was nearly accomplished. The Rev. I. O. Stringer had been nominated by the Bishop and approved by the Church Missionary Society and the Canadian Board of Missions as successor to Bishop Bompas in the See of Selkirk (now called the See of Yukon). He was a good man and an earnest Churchman, and had had some years' experience of mission-work among the Indians of Peel River and the Eskimo of Herschel Island, at the mouth

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of the Mackenzie. Mr. Stringer was consecrated Bishop in St. John's Cathedral, Winnipeg, December 17, 1905, and his arrival in Selkirk Diocese was ardently looked for. With him was expected the Rev. A. E. O'Meara, of Toronto, to be placed in charge of the newly started mission at Conrad, twelve miles from Carcross, the centre of a new mining camp.

And so, with the mission staff a little better equipped, with the work of the diocese passing into younger and less toil-worn hands, our Bishop could now turn his thoughts to his own plans for the coming months. The Church Missionary Society had suggested to him a retiring pension, but this he declined to accept, unless he continued in some department of the work of the mission. His great desire now, and one which had for a long time past occupied his thoughts, was to start a new mission on Little Salmon River, where there are often congregated together 200 Indians who have seldom come within sound of the Gospel. But Bishop Stringer and others dissuaded him from the new venture, thinking that the work of starting a new mission, with the prospect of having to build a house and get in supplies for the coming winter, was one for which neither the Bishop himself nor his wife, at their advanced age, were fitted. Accepting this disappointment as God's will, Bishop Bompas prepared to go down the river to Forty Mile, below Dawson. Now was there bustle and unrest on the mission premises at Carcross preparatory to the departure.

A passage for the Bishop and Mrs. Bompas and two Indian girls had been secured on one of the river steamers to sail on Monday. This was Saturday, June 9, a day calm and bright, as the summer days in the far North mostly are. The Bishop was as active as ever on that day. Twice he had walked across the long railway bridge, and his quick elastic step had been commented on as that of a young man. Later on he had been up to the school, and on to the Indian camp to visit some sick Indians. Then he went home, and remained for some time in conversation with Bishop Stringer, into whose hands he had already committed all the affairs of the diocese. Then the mission party dined together, and at eight o'clock they all reassembled for prayers. After prayers the Bishop retired to his study and shut the door.

Was there, we wonder, any intimation of the coming rest

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in the breast of that stalwart warrior, whose end of life was now so near as to be reckoned, not by hours, but by minutes only? Was there any consciousness of having fought a good fight, and finished his course? We know not. Sitting on a box, as was his custom, he began the sermon which proved to be his last. Presently the pen stopped; the hand that so often had guided it was to do so no more. Near him was one of his flock, an Indian girl, who needed some attention, and as he arose he leaned his elbow on a pile of boxes. And while standing there the great call came: the hand of God touched him, and the body which had endured so much fell forward. When Bishop Stringer reached his side a few minutes later, the Indian girl was holding his head in her lap. Nothing could be done, and without a struggle, without one word of farewell, the brave soul passed forth to a higher life.

And so the tale is told, the chapter ended, and

“The long self-sacrifice is o’er.”

There is a humble grave in one of the loveliest and most secluded spots in the Yukon territory. Dark pine-forests guard that grave. During the winter months pure, untrodden snow covers it. It is enclosed by a rough fence made of fir-wood, which an Indian woodman cut down and trimmed, leaving the bark on, and then fixed strong and stable around the grave. But none will disturb that spot: no foot of man or beast will dishonour it; the sweet notes of the Canadian robin and the merry chirp of the snow-bird are almost the only sounds which break the silence of that sacred place. The Indians love that grave; the mission children visit it at times with soft steps and hushed voices to lay some cross of wild flowers or evergreen upon it. There is a grey granite headstone with the words, “In the peace of Christ,” and the name and age of him who rests beneath. It is the grave of Bishop Bompas.

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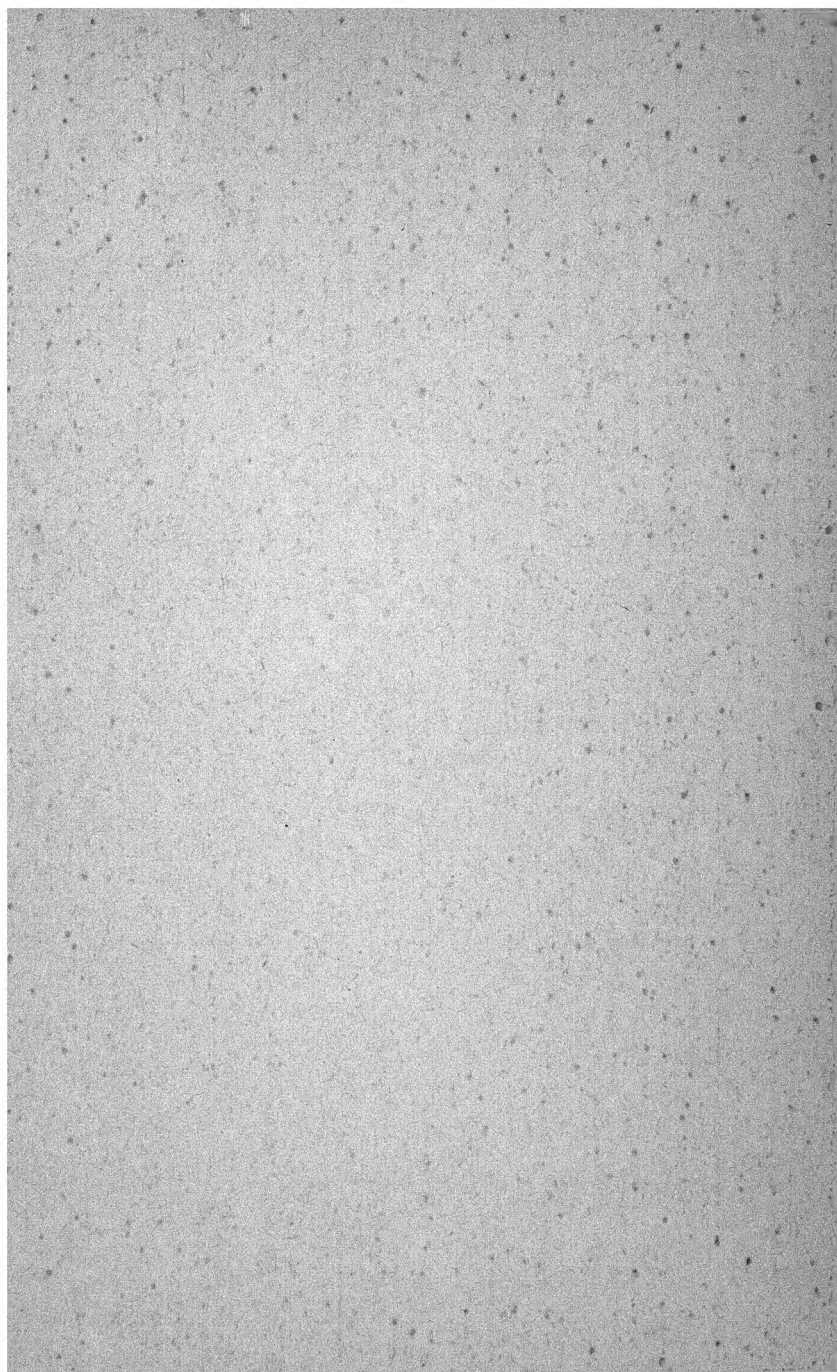
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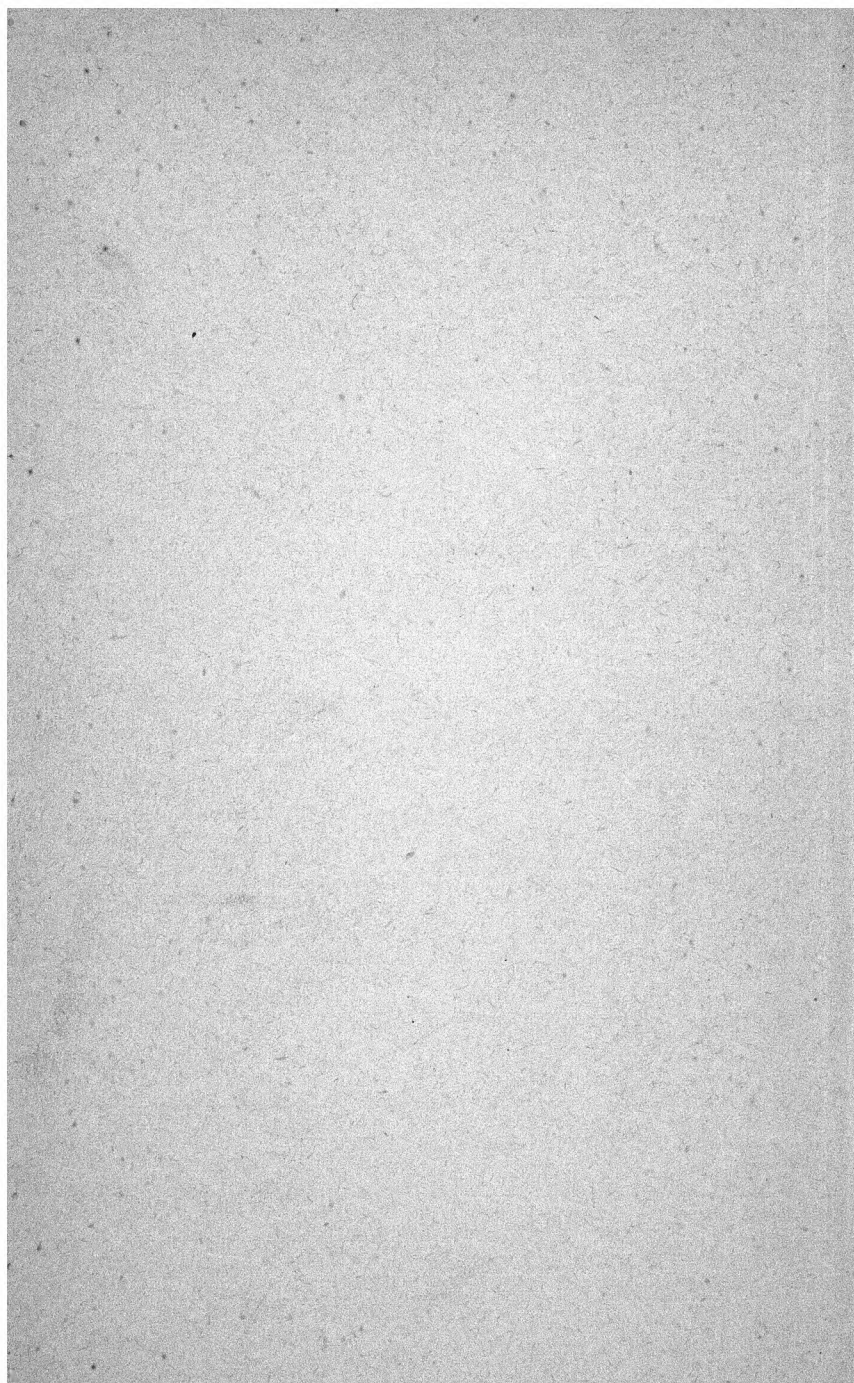
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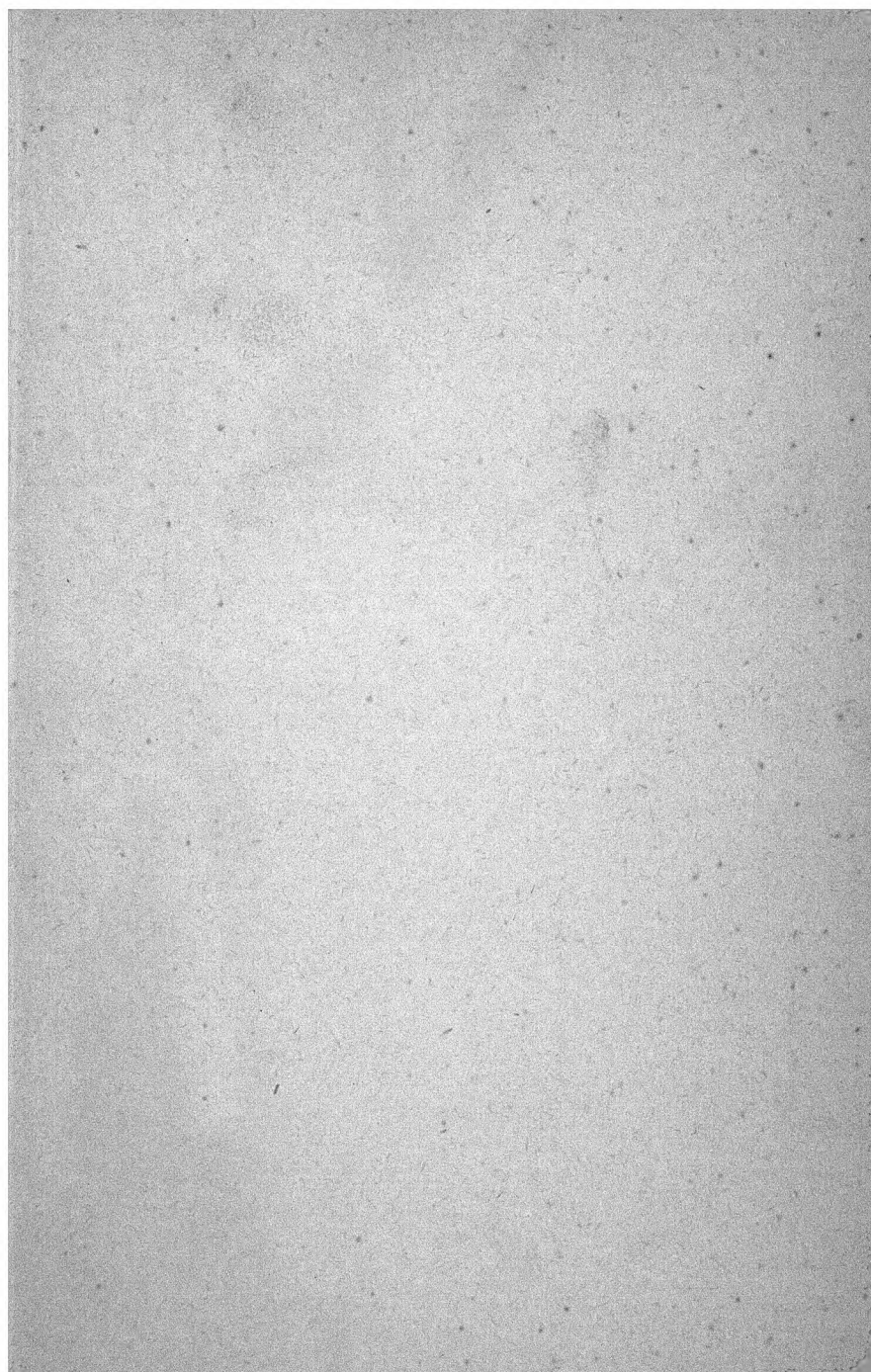
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